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**MAHATMA GANDHI**









MAHATMA GANDHI

# MAHATMA GANDHI

HIS LIFE, WRITINGS & SPEECHES

WITH FOREWORD

BY

Mrs. SAROJINI NAIDU

ENLARGED EDITION

GANESH & CO., MADRAS

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“I see in Mr. Gandhi the patient sufferer for the cause of righteousness and mercy, a truer representative of the Crucified Saviour than the men who have thrown him into prison and yet call themselves by the name of Christ.”—*Lord Bishop of Madras.*

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## PUBLISHERS' NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The publishers are grateful to the public for the hearty reception accorded to their first edition of this book which has encouraged them to bring out this second and enlarged edition. Not only several new writings and speeches have been incorporated in this edition not found in the first but the life-sketch prefixed to the Volume has also been brought up-to-date.

The publishers desire to record their grateful thanks to Mr. Gandhi for his having kindly allowed them to include in this volume a translation of his address at the Gujarati Political Conference.



## PUBLISHERS' NOTE

THE publishers feel that no apology or justification on their part is needed for sending out this volume to the public. All who honour nobility of purpose and high rectitude of conduct, all who honour Mr. Gandhi, who is as an embodiment of them, will be glad to have in a collected form the writings and speeches of a man whose words still linger behind his deeds. This volume is by no means exhaustive. Mr. Gandhi's speeches and writings lie scattered in various places and the task of collection is not yet over. When sufficient material has accumulated the publishers hope to issue a second volume.

In conclusion, the publishers desire to express their thanks to a friend of theirs who is responsible for the life-sketch, and to Mrs. Sarojini Naidu for having contributed the beautiful foreword found at the beginning of this volume.

## FOREWORD

“It is only India that knows how to honour greatness in rags” said a friend to me one day as we watched Mahatma Gandhi cleaving his way through the surging enthusiasm of a vast assembly at Lucknow last year.

For surely the sudden appearance of Saint Francis of Assisi in his tattered robe in the fashionable purlieus London or Milan, Paris or Petrograd to-day were scarcely more disconcerting or incongruous than the presence of this strange man with his bare feet and coarse garments, his tranquil eyes, and calm, kind smile that disclaims even while it acknowledges a homage that emperors cannot buy.

But India, though she shift and enlarge her circumference age after age keeps true to her spiritual centre and retains her spiritual vision undimmed and eager to acclaim her saints. Let us not follow the conventional mode of the world and wait for a man to be dead to canonise him

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but rather let our critical judgment confirm the unerring instinct of the people that recognizes in Mahatma Gandhi a lineal descendant of those great sons of compassion who became the servants of humanity—Gautama Buddha, Chaitanya, Ramanuja, Ramakrishna.

He lacks, may be, the breadth and height and ecstasy of their mystical attainment : but he is not less than theirs in his intensity of love, his sincerity of service and a lofty simplicity of life which is the austere flower of renunciation and self-sacrifice.

There are those who impatient and afraid of his exalted idealism would fain ignore him as fanatic, a mere fanciful dreamer of inconvenient and impossible dreams.

And yet, who can deny that this gentle and lowly apostle of passive resistance has more than a militant energy and courage and knows as Gokhale said how to “mould heroes out of common clay?”

Who can deny that this inexorable idealist who would reduce all life to an impersonal formula is the most vital personal force in the national movement and the prophet of Indian self-realization ?

### *Foreword.*

He has mastered the secret of real greatness and learnt that true Yoga is wisdom in action and that love is the fulfilling of the law.

HYDERABAD,  
DECCAN,  
22nd Nov., 1917. } SAROJINI NAIDU.



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# **MOHĀNDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI**

## **A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE AND CAREER.**

**T**HE figure of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi is to-day a transfigured presence in the eyes of his countrymen. Like the unveiling of some sanctuary, where the high gods sit in session, or like some romance of the soul, is his career. The loftiest ideals of conduct of which man has dreamed are in him translated into actuality. He is the latest, though not the least, of the world's apostles. He seems for ever robed in vestments of shining white. Infinitely gentle, to the inner ear, is his footfall upon earth. His accents have the dewy freshness of the dawn. His brows are steeped in serenity and calm. His head is crowned with the martyr's crown. The radiance of the light spiritual encircles his whole being.

What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and loose his own soul! Return good for evil. Hatred ceases not by hatred but by love. How often has humanity in its long story listened to such exhortations! And yet how few are the souls to whom they have ever carried the waters of life! To all men, surely, come glimpses of the highest. At the moment they touch our being with

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ecstasy and fade even before they are recognised with the great Ones of earth, the elect of God. They live their lives as ever before the altar. A divine inebriation is upon them and they can know no rest till they have drained the immortal cup to the dregs. The steep they sight they needs must climb: and far down in the valley there kneels before them an adoring host of mortals.

The spontaneous and heartfelt reverence which Mr. Gandhi's name inspires to-day is a token that in him also India has recognised one such born priest of the ideal. The Sermon on the Mount may appear to many as gloriously impractical, but to Mr. Gandhi at least nothing is or ought to be more practical. To turn the left cheek when the right is beaten; to bless those that curse; to suffer for righteousness' sake: these are the very ideals to which he has surrendered his whole being. And by impassioned devotion to them he has developed a character before which men stand in awe. To the self-discipline of the ascetic he adds the sweetness and simplicity of a saint. The hero's will is in him wedded to the heart of a child. The service of man answers to the love of God. It was of such that it was said: *Ye are the salt of the earth.*

✓ But how to write the life of such a man? How to tell the story of the soul's development? The task is impossible. The hopes and strivings of millions fulfil themselves in a single perfected character and to that extent the common man makes the hero and the apostle. The events of the personal drama simply register the rise and fall of consciousness; their explanation is outside them.

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In Mr. Gandhi's case, such a revelation came in the shape of the South African struggle. It was then that he burst upon the world as a moral force of the first order. That force itself had been long in preparing: how long who shall say? The story of that struggle with its shining roll of martyrs, both men and women, its thrilling incidents, marvellous pathos, and divine inspiration still waits for its destined chronicler. When he comes and throws it into terms of immortal literature it will assuredly take rank with the most memorable and resplendent chapters of its kind in history. It was an example and a demonstration of what one man can do by the sheer force of his character. It was likewise a demonstration of how masses of men and women, apparently lifeless and down-trodden, can develop astounding heroism under the impulsion of a truly great and selfless leader. The work done by Mr. Gandhi in South Africa must ever be reckoned amongst the greatest things accomplished by any single man. His life prior to his emergence on the South African stage was comparatively uneventful except for one or two glimpses of the coming greatness.

Mohandas Karmachand Gandhi was born on the 2nd of October, 1869, the youngest of three children in a Vaishya family, at Porbander, a city of Kathiawar in Guzerat. Courage, administrative capacity, and piety were hereditary in the family. His immediate ancestors were in their way quite remarkable. His grand-father was Dewan of the Rana of Porbander, and an incident recorded of him shows what a fearless nature he had. In-

curing the displeasure of the Queen who was acting as Regent for her son, he had actually to flee the Court of Porbander and take refuge with the Nawab of Junagadh who received him with great kindness. The courtiers of the Nawab observed and remarked that the ex-Dewan of Porbander gave his salute to the Nawab with his left hand in outrage of all convention. But the intrepid man replied, "In spite of all that I have suffered I keep my right hand for Porbander still." Mr. Gandhi's father was no less distinguished. Succeeding his father as Dewan of Porbander and losing like him the favour of the Ruling Chief, he repaired to Rajkot where he was entertained as Dewan. Here he rose rapidly in favour and such was the high regard which the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot came to have for him that he (the Thakore Saheb) pressed his minister to accept a large grant of land in token of his esteem. But wealth had no attractions for him, and at first he declined the generous offer. Even when the entreaties of friends and relatives prevailed at last it was only a fraction of what was offered that he could be persuaded to accept. Even more interesting is another incident told of him. Happening to hear one day the Assistant Political Agent hold abusive language regarding the Thakore Sahib, he indignantly repudiated it. His Omnipotence the Political Agent demanded an apology which was stoutly refused. To rehabilitate his dignity the Assistant Political Agent there-upon ordered the offending Dewan to be arrested and detained under a tree for some hours ! The apology was eventually waived and a recon-

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ciliation effected. Comment is needless. Mr. Gandhi's father was also a man of severe piety and could repeat the Baghavat Gita from end to end. His mother, however, was the most remarkable of all. Her influence on the character of her son has been profound and ineffaceable. Religion was the breath of her life. Long and rigorous were her fasts; many and lavish were her charities; and never could she brook to see a starving soul in her neighbourhood. Though in these respects she was typical of the Hindu woman, yet one feels that there must have been something unique about her. How else could she have been the mother of a Gandhi? —

In a home presided over by such a mother was his childhood passed. He was duly put to school at Porbander but a change occurring in its fortunes the whole family removed to Rajkot. Here the boy studied at first in a Vernacular School, and afterwards in the Kathiawar High School, whence he passed the matriculation examination at the age of seventeen. It may here be said that Mr. Gandhi was married as a boy of twelve to the noble soul who is now his partner in life and the glorified participator in all his sufferings and struggles.

An incident in his school life deserves more than ordinary mention. Born and bred up in an atmosphere of uncompromising Vaishnavism, he had learned to perfection its ritual and worship, if not also to some extent, its rationale and doctrine. The principle of Ahimsa, non-killing (non-resistance to evil generally), is one of the keynotes of this teaching and Vaishnavas are, as a rule,

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strict vegetarians. But those were the days when even a schoolboy unconsciously imbibed a contempt for religion in general and for the ways of his forefathers in particular. Mr. Gandhi seems to have been no exception to this rule. Truth to say, the young Gandhi became a veritable sceptic even at the stage of his school career. This wreck of faith brought one disastrous consequence in its train. He and some school-companions of his came sincerely to believe that vegetarianism was a folly and supersition, and that to be civilised, the eating of flesh was essential. Nor were the boys slow to put their belief into action. Buying some flesh in secret every evening, they went to a secluded spot on the bank of a stream, cooked it and made a convivial meal. But Mr. Gandhi's conscience was all the while never at peace. At home he had to tell lies to excuse his lack of appetite and one subterfuge led to another. The boy loved truth and hated falsehood, and simplify to avoid telling lies he abjured flesh-eating for ever. Truly the boy is father of the man!

After he passed the matriculation examination he was advised by a friend of the family to go to England and qualify himself for the Bar. His mother, however, would not listen to any such thing. Many a gruesome tale had the good woman heard of the abandoned nature of life in England and she shrank from the prospect of exposing her son to all its temptations as from the thought of hell. But the son was firm and the mother had to yield. But not until she had taken her son to a Jain Sannyasin and made him swear three solemn vows forswearing wine,

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flesh and women, did she give her consent.

Once in England Mr. Gandhi set about to make of himself a thorough 'English gentleman.' An Indian friend of his, then in England, who gloried in his anglicised ways took him in hand and gave lessons in fashion. Under his leadership he began to school himself in dancing. English music, and French, in fact in all the accomplishments needed for the great role of the 'English gentleman.' His heart, however, was never in the matter. The vows he had taken at his mother's instance haunted him strangely. One day he went to a party and there was served with flesh soup. It was a critical moment. His conscience swelled in protest and bade him make his choice on the spot between his three vows and the character of the English gentleman. And conscience won. Much to the chagrin of his friend before alluded to, he rose from the table and committed the great social sin of quitting the party abruptly. A great triumph for a youth ! He thereafter bade adieu to all his newfangled ways : his feet ceased to dance, his fingers knew the violin no more, and the possibilities of the 'English gentleman' in him were lost for ever.

All this proved to be but the beginning of a keen spiritual struggle which stirred his being to its depths and out of which emerged into an assured self-consciousness and abiding peace of soul. The eternal problems of existence faced him and pressed for an answer. That this struggle was not merely intellectual, that it was no passing spasm such as even inferior men have known is



proved by his subsequent career. As in the case of all great souls, his entire being was, we may take it, cast into the crucible to be melted and poured into divine moulds. The sense of an insufferable void within and without, that tribulation of the spirit which lays hands of torture upon the barred doors of the heart and unseals the inner vision—this it was that assailed him. At this critical time, friends were not wanting who tried to persuade him that in Christianity he would find the light for which he yearned. But these apparently did not meet with much success. At the same time he began to make a close study of the Bhagavad Gita, and it was the spiritual panorama which here was unveiled before him that finally stilled the commotion of his soul. It was here that he found the staff upon which he could lean. The void was now filled, light flooded his being and he had sensed the peace that passeth understanding. Hereafter the soul's endeavour was to be one, not of search, but realisation.

Mr. Gandhi's stay in England was otherwise uneventful. He passed the London Matriculation Examination, qualified himself for the Bar, and returned to India.

Melancholy news awaited his arrival in Bombay. Unknown to himself a calamity, which to a Hindu at least is one of the great calamities of life, had befallen him. His mother who had loved him as perhaps only a Hindu mother could, who had saved him from moral ruin, and who had doubtless winged ceaseless thoughts of love and prayer for her far-away son in England, that

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angel of a mother was no more. She had been dead sometime and the occurrence had been purposely kept a secret from him. We shall not attempt to describe his feelings when at last the news was disclosed to him.

The next eighteen months Mr. Gandhi spent, partly at Bombay and partly at Rajkot, devoting himself to a deeper study of love and the Hindu scriptures. He also set up practice in the Bombay High Court. But there was other work to do for him in a different part of the world and the fates thus fulfilled themselves. A firm at Porbander which had a branch at Pretoria had an important law-suit in South Africa in which several Indians were concerned. The conduct of this suit, expected to last for over a year being offered to him, he accepted it and proceeded to South Africa.

And here perhaps it will be fitting to envisage in general outline the position of the Indian immigrant in South Africa at the time. That position was frankly one of the utmost ignominy and injustice. More than half a century ago the colony of Natal wanted cheap labour for the development of its resources, and its eyes were turned to India as the best market for this supply. Representations were accordingly made to the Government of India through the Imperial Government and the indenture system was inaugurated: One gathers that in the early negotiations that went on between the Imperial and the Indian Governments on the question, solemn promises were made by the Imperial Government that the indentured immigrant would be treated with every consideration

during the term of indenture and thereafter be accorded every facility to settle in South Africa if he so chose. But the way to a certain place is paved with good intentions, and after a time the indenture system fast proved itself an abomination. Thousands of sturdy peasants from all parts of India, simple souls caught in the meshes of the recruiting agents by specious promises of a land flowing with milk and honey, found themselves on landing in South Africa waking up to a hopeless sense of anguish and disillusionment. The physical and moral conditions of life on the estates were ideally calculated to turn the very angels into brutes. The treatment accorded to the indentured labourer by his master was, to be as mild as possible, revolting in the extreme. The slave owner was at least compelled by his selfishness to take care of the physical comfort of his human chattels but the employer of indentured labour was destitute of even this consideration! The tales of cruelty and individual suffering that has been collected and published almost tempt us to think that man was made not in the image of God but in that of His Ancient Enemy. And the most hopeless feature of the situation was that these victims of colonial greed were bound to serve their term and that they had no chance of laying, and much less of making good, any case against their masters: The laws themselves were unjust to the indentured labourer and were atrociously administered.

The position of the indentured labourer who had served his term and did not desire to re-enlist was one of

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calculated invidiousness. At every step he was hemmed in by a thousand obstacles thrown in his way and intended to frustrate any attempt to acquire a livelihood in freedom. Law and society conspired together to fix the brand of helotry to his brow. It was brought home to him in numberless ways that he was regarded as the member of some sub-human species, in whom it was sacrilege to defile the earth occupied by the white man, except as his hewer of wood and drawer of water. The law of the land here also did but reflect this dominant spirit of exclusiveness. It made distinctions between man and man on the ground of colour and race. In Natal, for instance, every ex-indentured Indian, man, woman, and child (boys and girls over a certain age) had to pay a poll tax of £3 per head. It is unnecessary, however to catalogue in detail the various disabilities legal, economic, political and social under which the Indian laboured.

The small body of professional people, lawyers, doctors, merchants, religious teachers, who followed in the wake of the indentured Indian, these also, whatever their position and culture, fell equally under the same ban. The coloured man was in the eyes of the white colonist in South Africa a vile and accursed thing. There could be no distinction here of high and low. If these colonials had been asked to paint God they would have painted him white! There were certain differences in the position of the Indian between one province and another, in South Africa itself, the ideal in this line having been

attained in the Transvaal and the orange Free State, then independent. Not to labour the tale, throughout South Africa the law was unjust to the Indian and man inhuman.

It is however interesting to think what a medley of elements contributed to this attitude. First and foremost, there was the antipathy of colour and race—to what lengths this can go in the modern civilized West, the American institution of lynching sufficiently illustrates. Secondly, there was the economic factor—the free Indian was a formidable competitor in trade to the small white dealer. His habits were simple, his life temperate, and he was able to sell things much more cheaply. Thirdly, there was the instinct of earth-monopoly—South Africa must be and continue to remain a white man's land. Lastly, there was a vague feeling that the influx of the coloured man was a growing menace to the civilization of the white. The solution of the problem from the point of view of the South African colonist was very simple—to prohibit all immigration in the future, and to make the position of those that already had come so intolerable as to drive them to repatriate themselves. And towards this end, forces were inwardly making in South Africa when Mr. Gandhi first landed there. The paradox of the whole thing lay in the fact, that while India had been asking for the Indian, in South Africa, the elementary rights of a British citizen, the colonial was all the while thinking of casting him out for ever as an unclean thing.

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From the very day that Mr. Gandhi set foot at Natal he had to taste of the bitter cup of humiliation which was then the Indian's portion. At court he was rudely ordered to remove the barrister's turban he had on, and he left the court at once burning with mortification. The experience, however, was soon eclipsed by a host of others still more ignominious. Journeying to the Transvaal in a railway train, the guard unceremoniously ordered him to quit the first-class compartment, though he had paid for it, and betake himself to the van. Refusing, he was brutally dragged out with his luggage. And the train at once steamed off. All this was on British soil ! In the Transvaal itself things were even worse. As he was sitting on the box of a coach on the way to Pretoria, the guard asked him to dismount because he wanted to smoke there. A refusal brought two consecutive blows in quick succession. In Pretoria he was once kicked off a foot-path by a sentry. The catalogue may be still further extended, but it would be a weariness of the flesh.

The law suit which he had been engaged to conduct was at last over, and a social gathering was given in his honour on the eve of his departure for India. That evening Mr. Gandhi chanced to see a local newspaper which announced that a bill was about to be introduced into the colonial Parliament to disfranchise Indians and that other bills of a similar character were soon to follow. With true insight he immediately perceived the gravity of the situation, and explained to the assembled

guests that if the Indian community in South Africa was to be saved from utter extinction, immediate and resolute action should be taken. At his instance a message was at once sent to the colonial Parliament requesting delay of proceedings, which was soon followed up by a largely signed petition against the new measure. But all this was of no avail. The bill was passed in due course. Now another largely signed petition was sent to the Colonial Secretary in England, and in consequence the Royal Assent was withheld. But this again was of no avail for the same goal was reached by a new bill through a slightly different route. Now it was that Mr. Gandhi seriously mooted the question of a central organization in South Africa to keep vigilant watch over Indian interests. But it was represented to him that such an organization would be impossible unless he himself consented to remain in South Africa. The prominent Indians guaranteed him a practice if he should choose to stay. In response to their wishes he enrolled himself in the Supreme Court of Natal though not without some objection, at first, on the ground of his colour. Thus began for him that long association with South Africa which was destined to have such memorable results. From a moral point of view the choice that he made to remain in South Africa, to which he had gone only on a temporary professional visit, was the first great act of Mr. Gandhi's public career. A young man with his life before him and every prospect of carving distinction for himself in his own native land is called upon to

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brush all that aside and devote himself to the uplift of his own countrymen in a far away land amidst circumstances of disgusting humiliation and struggle. How many in Mr. Gandhi's position would have made the same choice? How many would have had the same passivity to surrender themselves to the guiding hand of destiny? How many would have placed service above self? But to men born for great ends such crises of the soul come only to find them prepared. The South African Indian community were like a flock of sheep without a shepherd, surrounded by ravenous wolves, and Mr. Gandhi choose to be the shepherd. South Africa was the vine-yard of the Lord in which he was called upon to dig and delve, and he chose to be the labourer. From the day that his resolve was taken he consecrated himself to his work as to a high and lofty mission.

His first step, was to make his countrymen in South Africa articulate. And with this object he organised them into various societies all over the land. He trained them in methods of constitutional agitation and for the purpose held meetings and conferences, and promoted petitions and memorials. He also sought out young men willing and capable and trained them for public work. And it was his character that imparted vitality to all his endeavours. By mixing with high and low on equal terms, by his readiness to succour the needy and console the afflicted, by the example he set of a simple, pure and austere life, by his transparent sincerity and perfect selflessness he made a profound impression upon them



all and acquired an influence which deepened in the passage of the years into a boundless reverence. Nor should it be forgotten that, that amongst the European community itself there were some good men and true who saw and recognised in him a soul of transcendent goodness.

In the year 1896 Mr. Gandhi came to India to take his wife and children to South Africa. Before he left South Africa he wrote and published an 'open letter' detailing the wrongs and grievances of his countrymen resident there.

News of the splendid work which he had done in South Africa had travelled before him to India, and Indians of all classes joined in according him an enthusiastic reception wherever he went. In these meetings Mr. Gandhi had of course to make some speeches. Our good friend, Reuter, sent highly garbled versions of his addresses to South Africa. He was represented as telling his Indian audiences that Indians in South Africa were uniformly treated like wild beasts. The blood of the Colonials was up and the feeling against Mr. Gandhi reached white heat. Meeting after meeting was held in which he was denounced in the most scathing terms. Meanwhile he was urgently requested to return to Natal without a moment's delay, and he embarked accordingly.

The steamer carrying Mr. Gandhi reached Durban on the same day as another steamer, which had left Bombay with 600 Indian passengers on board two days after Mr. Gandhi's own departure. The two ships were

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immediately quarantined indefinitely. Great things were transpiring at Durban meanwhile. The Colonials were determined not to land the Asiatics. Gigantic demonstrations were taking place, and the expediency of sending the Indians back was gravely discussed. It was plain that the Colonials would go any length to accomplish their purpose. The more boisterous spirits even proposed the sinking of the ship. Word was sent to Mr. Gandhi that if he and his compatriots should attempt to land they should do so at infinite peril ; but threats were of no avail. On the day on which the new Indian arrivals were expected to land a huge concourse had assembled at the docks. There was no end of hissing, shouting, roaring and cursing. The Attorney-General of Natal addressed the infuriate gathering and promised them that the matter would receive the early attention of Parliament, commanding them at the same time in the name of the Queen to disperse. And the crowd dispersed. Mr. Gandhi came ashore sometime after the landing of his fellow-passengers, having previously sent his wife and children to the house of a friend. He was immediately recognised by some of the stragglers who at once began to set up a howl. A rickshaw was engaged, but the way was blocked. Mr. Gandhi walked on foot with a European friend and when they reached one of the streets the pressure was so great that the two friends were separated. The crowd at once began to maul Mr. Gandhi till the Police came and took him to the house of a friend. The Police Superintendent expressed his apprehensions that the mob in

their frenzy would even set fire to the house. Mr. Gandhi was obliged to dress himself as a Police constable and take refuge in the Police Station. This ebullition of abnormal feeling subsided after some time and a momentous page in Mr. Gandhi's life was turned.

In October 1899 war broke out between the English and the Boers in South Africa. Mr. Gandhi, with the sagacity of a true leader at once perceived what a golden opportunity it was to the British Indians to vindicate self-respect and readiness to suffer in the cause of the Empire. At his call hundreds of his countrymen in South Africa were glad to enlist themselves as Volunteers, but the offer was rejected with scorn by the powers that be. The offer was renewed a second time, only to meet with a similar fate. When however the British arms sustained some disasters, it was recognised that every man available should be put into the field and Mr. Gandhi's offer on behalf of his compatriots was accepted. A thousand Indians came forward, and were constituted into an Ambulance Corps, to assist in carrying the wounded to the hospitals. Of the service that was rendered in that direction, it is not necessary to speak as it has been recognised even in South Africa. At another time the British Indians were employed to receive the wounded out of the line of fire and carry them to a place more than twenty miles off. When the battle was raging, Major Bapte who was commanding came to Mr. Gandhi who of course was one of the Volunteers, and represented that if they worked from within the line of the fire they

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should be rendering inestimable service. At once all the Indian Volunteers responded to the request and dauntlessly exposed themselves to shot and shell. Many an Indian life was lost that day.

The war was over and the Transvaal became a part of the British Empire. Mr. Gandhi was under the impression that, since the wrongs of the British Indian subjects of the Queen were one of the declared causes of the war, under the new Government those wrongs would be a thing of the past. And accordingly he returned to India with no idea of going back, but he was reckoning without his host. The little finger of the new Government was thicker than the loins of the Boers. The Boers had indeed stung the Indian subjects of the Queen with whips but the new Government stung them with scorpions. A new Asiatic department was constituted to deal with Asiatics as a species apart. A most insidious policy of exclusion was maturing. The prospect was dark and appalling and Mr. Gandhi had to return to the scene of his labours. He interviewed the authorities but he was assured that he had no business to interfere in the matter while they themselves were there to look after everything. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain was then in South Africa and a deputation led by Mr. Gandhi waited upon him in Natal. In Pretoria however a similar deputation was disallowed unless Mr. Gandhi was excluded. Evidently Mr. Gandhi's name was becoming gall and worm-wood to the authorities. But he was not the man to be frightened. He determined to fight out the battle in the Law Courts and en-

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rolled himself on the Supreme Court of Pretoria.

He now felt more than ever the imperative need of an organ which should at once educate the South African Indian community on the one hand and be on the other the faithful mouthpiece of their views. In 1903 a press was bought and the paper "Indian Opinion" was ushered into existence. It was published in four languages, English, Tamil, Guzerati and Hindi. At first it didn't prove a success and entailed such heavy loss that during the first year alone Mr. Gandhi had to pay a sum of £2,000 out of his own pocket. Though in subsequent years the financial position of the paper has somewhat improved, it has never been a pecuniary success. Notwithstanding, it has grown to be a great force in South Africa and rendered invaluable service during the recent struggle.

In the year 1904 a virulent attack of plague broke out among the Indian Community in Johannesburg. The Municipal authorities were either ignorant or apathetic. Mr. Gandhi, however, was at once on the scene and sent word to the authorities that if immediate action were not taken an epidemic was in prospect. But no answer came. One day the plague carried off as many as twenty-one victims. Mr. Gandhi with three or four noble comrades at once broke open one of the Indian stores which was empty, and had the patients carried there and did what he could in the matter. The next morning the Municipal authorities bestirred themselves and took the necessary action. The plague lasted a

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month counting more than a hundred victims. We in India may shudder to think to what an appalling magnitude the outbreak may have grown but for the heroic endeavours of the subject of this sketch and his devoted comrades. In such ways, indeed, had Mr. Gandhi's influence begun to bear fruit.

It was about this time also that Mr. Gandhi founded the famous "Phoenix Settlement." He had been reading Ruskin's *Unto this Last* and its influence sank deep into his mind. He was at once on fire with the author's idea of country settlements and shortly after the plague subsided, Mr. Gandhi went to Natal and purchased a piece of land at Phoenix, a place situated "on the hill sides of a rich grassy country." Houses were built and a village sprang up on the mountain side. In this 'settlement' Mr. Gandhi sought to enshrine his ideal of the simple life. It was to be a retreat from the bustle of city life where men and women might by communion with nature seek to divest their life and mind of all artificial trappings and come nearer to the source of their own being. It was to be an ashrama, a spot of sanctity and peace. Its members were to be a spiritual brotherhood and were to know no differences of rank. To all alike labour was to be a privilege and a joy. All had to dig, plough and cultivate the adjoining land with their own hands. Mr. Gandhi himself when he was in South Africa used to go to the village during his moments of leisure and take part in the work of cultivation like anybody else. But he had to fulfil this

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sublime idealistic impulse of his at immense pecuniary sacrifice, for the scheme ; we are told "absolutely impoverished him."

It was here also that Mr. Gandhi practised a great *tapasya*. Here he laid upon himself and his family the yoke of an iron discipline in daily habit. He stripped himself of all luxury in externals. He wore the coarsest raiment and for food took only so much as would suffice to keep body and soul together. He slept upon a coarse blanket in the open air. He starved the flesh and reined in the mind. And his soul waxed in joy and strength. And to those that beheld it was a marvel and a wonder.

In 1906 the Zulus broke out in rebellion and a corps of twenty Indians with Mr. Gandhi as leader was formed to help to carry the wounded to the hospital. The crops subsequently acted as nurses and Mr. Gandhi ministered in person to the wounded Zulus. The founding of the Phoenix Ashrama and the nursing of the Zulus with all their meaning in terms of the higher life were a fitting prelude to what was about to follow.

In the year 1906 the new Government of the Transvaal brought forward a new law affecting all Asiatics, which was sinister, retrograde and obnoxious in the last degree. One morning all the children of Asia in the Transvaal awoke and found themselves called upon to register themselves anew by giving thumb impressions. Thus all Asiatics were placed on a level with convicts. And yet these ligthearted legislators and their compatriots were by profession the flock of an Asiatic whose

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injunction to his disciples was to go forth amongst the children of men as lambs amongst wolves! Who will dare to say that in the dealings of the western nations with 'coloured' races this spirit has ever been much in evidence? How else could these colonials have so merrily blackened a whole continent which has been the home of the oldest civilisations and has given to humanity its greatest prophets and saviours? But in this case also the Asiatic lambs were destined to give a glorious object-lesson to the wolves.

The object of the new measure was apparently to prevent unlawful immigration from what they regarded as the pariah continent. Now the Indian Community throughout South Africa and their leaders were quite willing that reasonable restrictions should be placed on all future immigration though on abstract considerations of justice they could have insisted upon the right of the 'open door.' But what they had been agitating against all these years and what they could not reconcile themselves to was that this object should be compassed by laws which tended to differentiate them on any ground of colour or race. The principle of equality of all races before the law, however much its application may have to be tempered by considerations of circumstance, had been the very head and front of their demands. And now defiance and contempt were hurled at them in the shape of this new law. It was at the same time a certainty that it was but the precursor in the Transvaal and in other parts of South Africa of more insidious and



flagrant measures intended to drive out the Indian Community once and for ever. And it was hailed by the colonials as the beginning of the end, while the Indian Community was convulsed with indignation.

Meanwhile Mr. Gandhi and his co-workers were not idle. They proceeded to interview the member of the Government in charge of the new bill, but when they succeeded only in getting women excluded from its operation it was realised that there was now nothing left for persuasion to accomplish. The Legislative Council passed the new measure after the farce of a discussion. Infinitely more important to use are the proceedings of another meeting held in that very city and at the very time when the bill was being rushed through the council. It is an immense gathering, consisting of several thousands of Indians of all classes and creeds. A great spirit animates all. Impassioned speeches are made denouncing the new law. But now at the close, the great throng rises up and shouts a solemn 'Amen.' It is the vow of passive resistance that he has thus been administered. Those thousands had decided not against the new bill but against the new Act. They had decided also that henceforth they were to be the masters of their own fate and not General Smuts or Botha or the Legislative Council. And the onlooker may well have whispered to himself, "To-day we have been present at the lighting of a fire which will never go out."

It was a momentous step. But Mr. Gandhi on whom the burden of leadership now lay heavily was

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eager to take any step that promised an alternative solution. And accordingly a deputation under his leadership and that of Mr. Ali was sent to England to agitate, if possible, against the Royal Assent being given to the new legislation. The Royal Assent was withheld in consequence till a constitutional Government should be installed in the Transvaal. As a result of its efforts a committee in London with Lord Amphill, ex-Governor of Madras, as President, Sir Mancherjee Bowanaggee as Executive Chairman, and Mr. Ritch as Secretary, was also formed to keep guard over Indian interests in South Africa. But the relief thus obtained was only temporary. A constitutional Government was soon formed in the Transvaal, the new measure was passed in hot haste, received the Royal Assent, and became law.

Thus was the Indian community in the Transvaal impeiled upon the great destiny of passive resistance. To register or not to register was now the question : to register and sell their honour and self-respect for a mess of pottage or not to register and take up arms against a 'sea of troubles.' Like the voice of God speaking to the inmost soul was Mr. Gandhi's appeal to his countrymen at this hour. There could be no question, he explained, of their submitting to this final and crowning challenge of colonial insolence to Indian manhood. There was nothing left but to bare the majesty of their own souls to the storm and defy it to do its utmost. The prison and the gaol were now to be the cells of their own self-discipline. All the forces of darkness in league

were powerless to move them from the firm-set purpose of their own hearts. Was spirit greater than matter? Was the body to be nailed to the cross or the soul. Was not Heaven itself beckoning them to the great Heights? In such wise did Mr. Gandhi adjure his countrymen.

The words of the leader awoke a responsive thrill in thousands of intrepid hearts. Like one man they vowed against the registration. Like one man they resolved to face prosecution and persecution, dungeon and death itself. Like one man they resolved to make atonement for the heaped-up humiliations of many years by a supreme and triumphant act of self-vindication which should rivet the eyes of the whole world. The hour of the spirit's rebound when individuals and communities alike cleave through every consideration save that of their own integrity, that hour had come.

The passive resistance movement had commenced. The registering officers went about from place to place, but little business had they to do as ninety-five per cent. of the people remained true to their oath. The law took its course and a veritable saturnalia of imprisonments ensued. The gaols became literally cramed with the Indians who suffered for conscience's sake. High and low, rich and poor went to the gaol as to the bridal. Husband was separated from wife, child from parent, and yet the fervour and pertinacity of the sufferers abated not. Mr Gandhi himself was sentenced to two month's simple imprisonment. During the trial he took full responsibility for the course adopted by the Indian com-

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munity and asked for the maximum punishment for himself. The authorities were naturally perturbed to see the worm turning and for the first time displayed a chastened mood. Negotiations were opened through the mediation of one, Mr. Cartwright, a journalist, and it was agreed that the new law should be suspended for three months, that in the meanwhile registration should be made voluntarily, and that at the end of the period it should be repealed. In pursuance of this arrangement Mr. Gandhi himself, to set an example, went to the office to register. The position of a leader is fraught with peril, and a Pathan who had joined the passive resistance movement imagined that Mr. Gandhi was playing the coward and betraying his trust. Under this impression he dealt him such severe blows on his way to the registration office that he instantly fell down senseless on the spot. As a result of the injuries received he hovered between life and death for some time, during which the wife of his good friend and admirer, the Rev. Mr. Doke, a baptist minister of Johannesburg, devotedly nursed him back to life. His friends afterwards asked him to take legal action against the Pathan but he replied that the Pathan had done only what he considered to be right! This incident threw the situation into confusion for the moment but subsequently the process of voluntary registration was satisfactorily completed and the authorities were called upon to perform their part of the compact. But this they refused to do, and all efforts at compromise proving futile there was now no alternative but to resume

the struggle.

Once more did the rapture of suffering come upon thousands and the prison-house become a holy of holies. And how glorious was the spirit which had come upon them ! Gentle and meek and uncomplaining, it was the very spirit of that Cross which their persecutors professed to follow but honoured so little in practice. It was almost as if one heard these men exclaim, "Lord, forgive them, for they know not what they do." From every class and sect were the heroes drawn. Many among them were the poorest of the poor, living by the sweat of the brow and innocent of 'education.' Wealthy merchants went into voluntary insolvency rather than prove false to their vow. The ruin and misery caused, the dislocation of family life, the hunger and starvation of the women and children were indescribable. But the women admit all the desolation of their hearts only cheered the men on ! The passive resisters were subjected to cruel hardships and indignities in gaol that their spirit might be broken, but this served only to quicken and intensify it. They had tasted of an immortal cup and anguish itself had now become only the food of their souls,

To us in Southern India it is a matter for splendid pride that amongst them all none displayed greater resolution or a more indomitable fibre than the children of the Tamil land. It has been calculated that out of a total population of nine thousand male Indians in the Transvaal two thousand seven hundred had in this way

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suffered 'untold miseries in prison,' and many of them again and again. Needless to say, Mr. Gandhi himself was one of the victims this time also, being sentenced to a term of two months with hard labour. We have no space to refer to the hardships he endured with his brother-sufferers in jail, to his many acts of self-denial, and to the sublime manner in which he bore up, believing as he did that suffering is the heavenordained path to perfection. That so many should have been consumed by the apostolic fire and should have so clearly realised the issues at stake is a tribute at once to the relentless fury of the persecutors, the spiritual force of Mr. Gandhi and the greatness of common human nature.

After his release from his second term of imprisonment Mr. Gandhi organised two deputations, one to England and the other to India for the purpose of educating public opinion in both countries. Several of the delegates were arrested on the eve of their departure and sentenced to prison as passive resisters. But Mr. Gandhi and some others nevertheless went to England and were successful in awakening some interest in the matter. The Transvaal ministers were then in England and the Imperial authorities tried to bring about a settlement. But General Smuts was implacable and nothing worth mentioning came of it. Arrangements were however made for a body of volunteers who undertook to collect funds and keep public interest alive, and the deputation returned to South Africa.

The deputation to India consisted of but one indi-

vidual, that doughty and indefatigable champion of the Indian cause in South Africa, and Editor of the paper '*Indian Opinion*,' Mr. H. S. L. Polak. Feeling in India had reached a high pitch of resentment against the policy of the Transvaal Government even before his arrival. But when he under the direction of the late Mr. Gokhale toured the country and narrated in dozens of meetings the heart-rending tale of the South African persecution that feeling easily reached boiling-point and the demand for reprisals came from every quarter of the land. Funds also came pouring in for the relief of the distressed children in a far-away land who had done so much to raise their motherland in the estimation of the world.

One great and immediate result of Mr. Polak's propaganda was that attention in India was concentrated upon the enormities of the Indenture system as never it had been concentrated before. And when in March 1912 the late Mr. Gokhale moved in the Imperial Legislative Council a resolution for its abolition in a speech of classic force and dignity, the Government of India had to bow to Indian public opinion and signify acceptance. It was the first great victory of the Passive Resistance movement.

In South Africa itself the movement had a two-fold reaction. On the one hand, it made an indelible impression upon the better mind of the colonial and this found expression in the formation of a committee called the Hosken Committee, under the presidency of Sir

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William Hosken, a good, ardent and noble man, who in the face of obloquy from his own countrymen expounded the Indian cause with a zeal that was above all praise. On the other hand, it spurred the authorities to that increasing vindictiveness which imagines that the soul could be coerced by a more thoroughgoing application of brute force.

With the blindness that has characterised the persecutor in history the authorities in the Transvaal strengthened their hands by a new power, *viz.*, that of deportation, hoping thereby to foil the Passive Resister. At first they deported the more prominent of them across the Natal border but these returned as fast as they were sent out. Not to be balked the authorities now went the length of deporting a good many of the passive resisters, about sixty-four in number, all the way to India. But these again were sent back with the sympathy and admiration of a whole nation. Utterly lost to all sense of shame the Transvaal authorities by hook and by crook did their level best to prevent them from landing. And one of the returning deportees, a lion-hearted youth Narayanaswamy, by name, hunted in this way from one British port to another died in Delgoa Bay in Portuguese territory. And his martyr-death threw a fresh halo of sanctity over the cause. The Government of India greatly impressed by the gravity of the situation in India consequent on the Transvaal occurrences moved the Imperial Government in England, who in their turn did their best to woo the



Transvaalies to a more conciliatory mood. And the result was that the<sup>c</sup> deportation process subsequently stopped.

After the various provinces of South Africa had been constituted into the South African Union the Imperial Government in England at the insistence of the Government of India strove once more to persuade the Union Government to effect a reasonable settlement of the problem, and for the purpose, addressed to the latter a despatch in October 1910, recommending the repeal of the law which had been the origin of the whole trouble, and the adoption of legislation on non-racial lines which, while prohibiting all future immigration in effect, will yet leave room for the entry into South Africa of a small and defined minimum of educated people. At the same time the Imperial Government pointed out that any such law should not have the effect of taking away any rights till then enjoyed by immigrants in the coast-lying provinces. This time the Union Government were willing to consider the suggestion, and to give effect thereto brought forward the Union Immigration Bill in 1911. which while repealing the old law did not annul the racial distinction, and further took away several right from the residents of the coast districts—the very thing deprecated by the Imperial Government. This bill was naturally unacceptable to the Indian Community and finally was not passed. An understanding however was arrived at by which the passive resisters agreed to suspend their

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movement, and the authorities agreed to introduce satisfactory legislation in 1912, meanwhile administering the law as though it had been already altered. The measure of 1912 was however no better and the truce was extended for one more year. It was then that Mr. Gandhi invited the late Mr. Gokhale to South Africa to study the whole situation on the spot, and latter, with the full approval of the Indian and Imperial Governments sailed for that country and arrived at Capetown on 22nd October, 1912. He stayed for about three weeks and toured the whole country visiting every important city. Everywhere he was received with signal honour, not merely by the Indian community but also by the colonial authorities themselves, and succeeded in making a great impression by that sweet reasonableness for which he was so well-known. He interviewed the Union ministers and secured from them the promise of a satisfactory settlement, and amongst other things the repeal of the £3 tax which every ex-indentured Indian man and women had to pay in Natal, and to which reference has been made already. Things seemed to augur well for the future and hope began to revive where despair had reigned before.

A fresh and extraordinary complication was now introduced into the situation in the shape of a judicial decision of the Union Court which declared all Indian marriages to be null and void under the law of Union. The consternation into which it plunged the entire Indian Community is imagined than described. When

the long-expected legislation was at last introduced into the Union Parliament in 1913, it was evident that it was merely tinkering with the whole problem without any attempt at solving it in a liberal or large-hearted manner. Warnings were accordingly given and representations made to the authorities by the Indian leaders but to no purpose. A few amendments were made in the original bill but the Act as passed was absolutely inadequate to meet the requirements of the situation. At this juncture a deputation was sent to England to bring home to the Imperial authorities and the British public the profound danger of the whole position, and the certainty that if timely steps were not taken it would lead to the revival of passive resistance on a vastly enlarged scale. But it was in vain. It required still an appalling amount of suffering before the conscience of the Union could at all be moved.

The struggle accordingly recommenced with a grimness and determination which threw into the shade even the previous campaigns. The principal planks of the passive resister this time were, the abolition of the £3 tax, the complete eradication of the racial bar as a principle of legislation, the recognition of the validity of Indian marriages, the right of entry into Cape Colony of all South Africa-born Indians, and the sympathetic and equitable administration of all laws affecting the British Indian immigrant.

Of the incidents of this final stage of the struggle one can speak only in terms of bated breath. For it had

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been decreed that the baptism of fire through which the Indian Community had been passing during these long years should now be bestowed on the only two classes which had hitherto remained outside it—the women and the indentured labourer. The Indian women in the Transvaal had indeed already played a memorable part, by the fine understanding they had displayed of the purposes of the whole movement, and by the whole-hearted sympathy and encouragement which they had given to their men-folk. But the time had now come for women themselves to step into the flaming breach. Like an arrow in the heart did they receive the judicial dictum which pronounced their marriages to be invalid. Or rather it was that the entrance of this arrow was but the occasion for the opening of the flood-gates of that idealism of which women's heart is the chosen home. And in what a deluge did it thereafter pour! How many hundreds were the Indian women that sanctified the prison-houses of South Africa! And how superb was the intoxication that came upon the men-folk as they beheld their own mothers, wives and sisters mock at the crucifixion of the body! Never before in the history of the world had a more signal proof been given of the power of the human soul to defy the arrayed forces of wickedness and embrace suffering in the battle for honour and self-respect. The splendour and ecstasy of it all will last through the ages.

The account given by Mrs. Polak in the pages of 'Indian Opinion' of the part played by women in the struggle is so interesting that it deserves to be quoted in

full. She writes :—

“ Ruskin has said : ‘A women’s duty is two-fold, her duty to her home and her duty to the State.’, Scarcely an Indian woman in South Africa has read Ruskin’s words, probably never heard of them, but the spirit of truth manifests itself in many ways and places, and the Indian women of South Africa intuitively knew this as one of the true laws of life, and their work showed that they performed their greater duty accordingly. These women, without any training for public life, accustomed to the retirement of women of India, not versed or read in the science of sociology, just patient, dutiful wives, mothers, and daughters of a struggling class of workers, in an hour of need, moved by the spirit of a larger life, took up their duty to their country, and served it with that heroism of which such men alone are capable.

● It is said so often that women does not reason, and perhaps it is a charge largely true, but where the elementary laws of being are concerned, woman follows a surer path than any dictated by reason, and sooner or later gets to her goal. Every reform movement has shown that, from the moment women stand side by side with men in the maintenance of a principle, however dimly understood by them, the spirit of the movement grows, is crystallised, and success to the movement is assured.

The Western is so accustomed to think of the Indian woman as one living in retirement, without any broad thought and without any interest in public affairs, that it must have come with a shock of surprise to learn that

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many Indian women, some with babies in their arms, some expecting babies to be born to them, and some quite young girls, were leaving their homes and taking part in all the hardships of the Passive Resistance campaign.

The last phase of the fight, and the one through which to-day we rejoice in peace, was practically led in the early stages by a small band of women from Natal, who challenged prison to vindicate their right to the legal recognition of their wifehood, and a similar small band of women from Johannesburg.

The women from Natal, all of them wives of well-known members of the Indian community, travelled up to Volksrust, were arrested and sentenced to three months' hard labour, and were the first of hundreds to go to gaol. The women from the Transvaal travelled down the line, taking in the mines on their way, holding meetings and calling upon the men to refuse to work and to die rather than live as slaves, and at the call of these women, thousands laid down their tools and went on strike. I think it may safely be said that, but for the early work of these brave women, during the middle of last year, the wonderful response to the call of honour and country might never have taken place. About six weeks after, the Transvaal women left, they also were arrested, and a similar sentence to that passed upon the women of Natal, was passed upon them, and they were forcibly vaccinated. So these brave women were shut away from life, but the fight now so splendidly begun,

went on.

A few days after the release of these last women, two gave birth to children, and another, a young girl of about twenty, passed away, and a third hovered between life and death for months, but the goal was won. To-day, all these women are back in their homes and are busy in the usual routine of an Indian woman's life. There is absolutely none of the pride of heroism about them. They are the same patient, dutiful women that India has produced for centuries; yet they endured the publicity, and no one who does not know India can understand how terrible to the Indian woman such publicity is. They endured the physical hardship, the mental sorrow, the heartache; for nearly all who did not take young children with them left young ones at home, endured hunger strikes, because they were deprived of fat to eat and sandals to put on—endured it all without harshness or bitterness. India has many things to be proud of, but of none more than the part the Indian women of South Africa took in the uplifting and recognition of a people here despised."

The foregoing account refers to a strike on the coal-mines. The organization of a strike of the Indentured labourers was part and parcel of the scheme of the leaders for the final campaign. This strike and the famous march of the strikers to the Transvaal, we cannot better describe than in the words of an article entitled "That Wonderful March" in that self-same journal. It runs:—

"The question of the repeal of the £3 tax had

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become urgent already in 1908 and 1909, when an organisation had been formed for the purpose of securing it, and petitions widely signed had been sent to the then Natal Parliament, without other result than the passing of the ineffective Act of 1910, giving magistrates discretion—which some used while others did not—to exempt certain classes of women in certain circumstances.

During his campaign in India, in 1909-10 and 1911-12, and his visit to England in 1911, Mr. Polak had pressed the question upon the attention of the people and Government of India and the British public, who had hitherto been ignorant as for the harsh incidence of the tax and grim misery that it entailed.

Accordingly, when the Hon. Mr. Gokhale came to South Africa in 1912, and set himself to the task of examining Indian grievances on the spot, he immediately seized upon the tax as one that required and was capable of immediate remedy, and he, therefore, as he has told us, made special representations on the subject at the meeting of ministers at Pretoria, when, he is positive, a definite undertaking was given him to repeal the tax. His efforts to that end had already been foreshadowed whilst he had travelled through the Union, and he had given assurances to vast crowds of those liable to the tax that he would not rest until he had secured its repeal, a resolve that had been much encouraged by the sympathetic speeches and conversations of prominent Natalians, both at the Durban banquet, and at the subsequent Chamber of Commerce meeting. And these promises,



fortified by the knowledge of what had transpired at Pretoria, Mr. Gandhi, upon his return from Zanzibar, whither he had accompanied Mr. Gokhale, repeated again and again in a responsible manner, to large numbers of those affected by the tax.

When, therefore, in 1913, a measure was introduced into the Union Parliament, at the end of the session, exempting women only from its operation, but requiring them to take out an annual licence, a message was sent to Mr. Gokhale in India requiring whether the promise of repeal had been limited to women. The reply was that it applied to all who were affected by the tax, and the Bill was promptly killed by Mr. Meyler and the late Sir David Hunter, who protested against its further progress as they felt convinced that to pass it would be to delay total repeal indefinitely. Up to this time there had been no denial by the Government of the promise alleged.

At the rising of Parliament, Mr. Gandhi entered into fresh negotiations with the Union Government, reminding them of the promise, and asking for a definite undertaking of repeal of the tax in 1914. Meanwhile, in England, Mr. Polak, who had gone there at Mr. Gokhale's instance, had made it clear to the Imperial authorities and the British public that, whilst the repeal of the £3 tax had not previously formed part of the Passive Resisters' demands, the question had now become so acute, and Indian public feeling in South Africa had become so intense owing to what was re-

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gar'ded as the Union Government's breach of faith that, in the unfortunate event of the revival of the struggle, repeal of the tax would be made part and parcel of it. Lord Ampthill, too, after consulting with Mr. Gokhale, referred in explicit terms to the promise of repeal, in a portentous speech in the House of Lords. In the result, the Union Government declined to give an undertaking on the subject, though they still did not deny the promise, and the question therefore, formed one of the five points of Passive Resistance in Mr. A. M. Cachalia's letter of the 12th September, announcing the revival of the struggle. At the same time, Mr. Gokhale, in the face of the objections of his medical advisers, hurried back to India to rouse the Government and his fellow-countrymen to action.

On September 28, and before any important activity had developed Mr. Gandhi addressed to the Secretary for the Interior a letter containing the following warning and appeal :—

“ I know also what responsibility lies on my shoulders in advising such a momentous step, but I feel that it is not possible for me to refrain from advising a step which I consider to be necessary, to be of educational value, and, in the end, to be valuable both to the Indian community and to the State. This step consists in actively, persistently, and continuously asking those who are liable to pay the £3 tax to decline to do so and suffer the penalties for non-payment, and what is more important, in asking those who are now serving

indentured and who will, therefore, be liable to pay the £3 tax upon the completion of their indenture, to strike work until the tax is withdrawn. I feel that in view of Lord Ampthill's declaration in the 'House of Lords, evidently with the approval of Mr. Gokhale, as to the definite promise made by the Government and repeated to Lord Gladstone, this advice to indentured Indians would be fully justified. . . . Can I not even now, whilst in the midst of the struggle, appeal to General Smuts and ask him to reconsider his decision . . . . on the question of the £3 tax?" The letter was shown to General Smuts who vouchsafed no reply, but who also did not even then repudiate the promise, nor did he warn the employers of the intentions of the Passive Resistance leaders. A fortnight later, in a statement circulated by Reuter's Agency throughout the South African press, it was clearly stated that the "movement will also consist in advising indentured Indians to suspend work until the £3 Tax is removed. The indentured Indians will not be invited to join the general struggle" The public thus, received ample warning of what was toward.

The Indian women who had joined the struggle as a protest against the refusal of the Government to legalise Indian marriages and who, as Passive Resisters, had unsuccessfully sought imprisonment at Vereeniging, Germiston and Volksrust, were allowed to pass into Natal unmolested, and the first steps taken to "call out" the Indians on the coal-mines in the northern part of the

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Province were due to the courage and devotion of these women, whose appearance there was almost in the nature of an accident. Under the guidance of Mr. C.K.T. Naidoo, they made Newcastle their headquarters, and, travelling from mine to mine, they made eloquent appeal to the Indian labourers and their families to cease work until an assurance of repeal of the tax was given by the Government. The response was immediate and general. Mine after mine was closed down, as the Indian labourers refused to work, and a state of panic ensued amongst the employers, who at first continued to give rations as an inducement to their employees to remain on the mines. A hurried conference of mine-owners was held at Durban, at which Mr. Gandhi was invited to be present, and he then explained the situation and referred to the promise made to Mr. Gokhale. He pointed out that the labourers were being asked to strike only so long as the £3 Tax was unrepealed, and because it had been alleged—an allegation that was subsequently discovered to be well-founded—that the employers were opposed to repeal. The conference telegraphed to General Smuts inquiring about the promise, which was denied by him and by General Botha, for the first time; but it is significant that the late Mr. Fischer, who was also present at the meeting with the Ministers, did not repudiate it, though his physical condition did not preclude his doing so. Mr. Gokhale at once cabled, stating that a promise of repeal had undoubtedly been made to him, and, as a result of the hostile

attitude now taken up by the Government and by the employers, the labourers were invited to leave the mines, where improper influences were being used to induce them to return to work.

Mr. Gandhi placed himself at the head of a vast commissariat organisation, and, together with a small body of assistants, chief of whom was Mr. Albert Christopher, and with the co-operation of Mr. Kallenbach, the Indians—men, women and children—were fed and maintained at Newcastle, where they flocked by the hundred, coming by road and rail as fast as they could leave the mines, with the result that the latter from Dundee and Ladysmith to Newcastle, were denuded of their labour supply. It was a pathetic and yet a cheering sight to watch these patient hundreds plodding slowly along muddy roads, in inclement weather, to the Newcastle centre, where they lived on a handful of rice, bread, and sugar a day, in the open, without shelter, without cooking accommodation beyond what they improvised on the bare veld, without comfort of any kind. But they were buoyed up with a great hope, and they had an inspiring leader. Mr. Kallenbach, too, fought their battles for them with the Newcastle, municipality and magistracy, and later they saw how Mr. Gandhi shared their daily life and hardships, nursed the sick, and fed the hungry. They knew that the Indian women, who had urged them to strike, were cheerfully suffering imprisonment with hard labour, for their sake, and they felt in honour bound to struggle on until they

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had secured the repeal of the tax that weighed so heavily upon so many of them. And the women amongst them were no less heroic than the men. One mother, whose little child died of exposure on the road to Newcastle, was heard to say: "We must not pine for the dead; it is the living for which we must work." Such a spirit ensured ultimate success.

As their members swelled, it was felt that the only possible method of compelling the Union Government to realize their responsibilities and assume charge was to march the whole of the strikers into the Transvaal, there to court arrest and imprisonment, and it was accordingly decided to concentrate at Charlestown, the border village, where Messrs. Vallibhai and Mukdoom rendered great service. At the head of a large "army," therefore, Mr. Gandhi marched there on October 30th, but just before the march commenced, a number of strikers were arrested and removed to the gaols after sentence of imprisonment. Day by day hundreds more marched to or entrained for Charlestown, where a vast camp was organised, under the sanitary control of the District Health Officer, Dr. Briscoe, and rations, that were pouring in from Durban and Johannesburg Indian merchants, to which were added supplies purchased with money that was being cabled in large sums from India, were daily distributed to a gathering of men, women and children that numbered finally over 3,000.

Meanwhile, Mr. Gandhi had telegraphed the intentions of the "invaders" to the Government, who apparent

ly took no notice of the warning. Simultaneously, efforts were made, without success, by the Deputy Protector to induce the strikers to return to work, and large batches of them were arrested, and eventually imprisoned.

At last, a week after the notification, Mr. Gandhi commenced the now famous "invasion" of the Transvaal, with a following of over 2,000. The women and children were left behind at Charlestown, in charge of Miss Schlesin and Mr. Kallenbach, who worked day and night to make their lot somewhat easier. At the border, the "army" came to a stand, whilst Mr. Gandhi, who was near the rear, having remained behind to make final arrangements, came forward to interview the police officer who, with a small patrol, was on duty at the gate of entry. Whilst these preliminaries were in train, the main body became impatient, and a mass of cheering, shouting Indians, clad in ragged clothes, and bearing their pitifully small belongings upon their heads, swarmed through the streets of Volksrust, determined to do or die, brushing the handful of police aside like so many helpless and insignificant atoms. They encamped on the farther side of the town, and the great march had commenced. The programme was to march, at the rate of some 25 miles a day, until the men were arrested, or Tolstoy Farm, at Lawley, near Johannesburg, was reached, and the Government were informed, of each stopping-place. Eight days were set aside to reach their destination, unless they were earlier arrested, and,

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from the swing and energy of their marching, it was plain that a phenomenal feat was being performed by men, many of them heavily burdened, unused to conditions of "war," but accustomed to hard and simple life, and on a meagre and unusual diet. That night they reached Palmford, where special accommodation was offered to Mr. Gandhi, who, however, refused to accept hospitality which his humbler countrymen could not share.

Meanwhile, the Government were not altogether idle, but with that stupidity which almost invariably characterises governments in similar emergencies, they did the wrong thing, and issued a warrant for the arrest of Mr. Gandhi, hoping thus to demoralise the forces that he was leading. Mr. Gandhi surrendered to the warrant of Palmford, having, at the request of the authorities, pointed out some of his own followers to give evidence for him, as the Crown would not otherwise have been able to prove its case against him! He was motored swiftly to Volksrust, but the "army" silently and grimly pursued its march undeterred by the loss of its revered leader. At Volksrust, Mr. Gandhi was charged with breach of the Immigration Act and applied for bail, as he was in charge of large numbers of men entirely dependent upon him, and his application was granted. Realising, however, the probable risks that would ensue if the people were left leaderless he addressed the following telegram to the Minister of the Interior :

"Whilst I appreciate the fact of Government having



at last arrested prime mover in passive resistance struggle, cannot help remarking that from point view humanity moment chosen most unfortunate. Government probably know that marchers include 122 women, 50 tender children, all voluntarily marching on starvation rations without provision for shelter during stages. Tearing me away under such circumstances from them is violation all considerations justice. When arrested last night, left men without informing them. They might become infuriated. I therefore, ask either that I may be allowed continue march with men, or 'Government send them by rail Tolstoy Farm and provide full rations for them. Leaving them without one in whom they have confidence, and without Government making provision for them, is, in my opinion, an act from which I hope on reconsideration Government will recoil. If untoward incidents happen during further progress march, or if deaths occur, especially amongst women with babies in arms, responsibility will be Government's." No reply was returned to this humane appeal, but it was understood that the Government had no intention of assuming charge of this large body of men, women and children. Writing at the time of Mr. Gandhi's arrest, the special correspondent of the *Natal Mercury* sent his paper the following vivid description of the conditions prevailing both then and earlier at Charlestown :—

"We arrived at Palmford about 8-30 P.M. last night, and found them all sleeping in the veld, just below the station. Many of them were feeling the cold

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severely . . . I visited Charlestown twice on the 5th (the day before the march commenced). The whole appearance of the town resembled nothing but an Indian bazar. The town was crowded with Indians . . . No sanitary arrangements were made at first, and the position from a health point of view was awful ; but latter Mr. Gandhi assisted the municipal officials, and the position was greatly improved. I found Mr. Gandhi at the back of an Indian store, in the yard, serving out curry and rice to his followers, who marched up, and each man received his quota. One baker sold 5,000 loaves to the Indians in one day."

Mr. Gandhi, upon his release on bail, swiftly motored back to his followers, rejoining them on the march, which proceeded quietly as far as Paardeberg, where the remaining women and children were left behind in charge of a few of the men, who had become foot-sore. The main body reached Standerton on the morning of the 8th, where a number of strikers were arrested by their compound managers, assisted by a few police, and entrained for Natal. And here, too, Mr. Gandhi was re-arrested on the same charge as before. He again requested bail, and owing to the attitude of the strikers, who persistently refused to move from the Court precincts until their leader was restored to them, his request was granted, and the march was resumed immediately.

Sunday, the 9th, was an historic day. With a view to a final consultation with him before leaving for India,

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Mr. Polak had telegraphed to Mr. Gandhi, saying that he was joining him and had received a wire suggesting Greylingstad as the meeting place, but with the warning that he (Mr. Polak) might be arrested if he came. He joined the column at a small place named Teakworth, a few miles on the Standerton side of Greylingstad. The "army," spread along the road for a distance of some three miles, was led by a small, limping, bent but dogged man, coarsely dressed, and using a staff, with a serene and peaceful countenance, however, and a look of sureness and content. That was Gandhi, the principal Passive Resister. The two friends greeted each other, and eagerly exchanged news. Whilst thus engaged, and when about an hour distant from Greylingstad not far ahead was seen a Cape cart, and walking rapidly towards them were a couple of police officers, behind whom came Mr. M. Chamney, the Principal Immigration Officer of the Transvaal. Realising the pacific nature of the demonstration and of the Indian leader's intentions, Mr. Chamney had complimented Mr. Gandhi by undertaking his arrest upon a warrant issued under the Natal Indenture Law with no stronger support than this. The Cape cart, with its precious freight, drove swiftly away, and the column resumed its march quietly, under the leadership of Mr. Polak, who had at once assumed the responsibility, preceded by the two mounted policemen. A few minutes later, Messrs. Cachalia and Bhyat, who, together with Mr. Badat of Volksrust, were in charge of the commissariat arrangements, of which

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Mr. Polak was in entire ignorance, joined the column having accidentally missed it in, on another road, and they at once proceeded to Balfour, where it was due next morning and where food supplies were awaiting its arrival. The evening was fine and clear, and the cooking-fires that were lit from end to end of the veldt offered a bright and sparkling spectacle. Gradually, the buzz and throb of conversation sank, as sleep fell upon the camp. The night, however, was dismal and wretched, a cold wind howled mournfully down from the neighbouring hills, and a drizzle of rain added to the discomfort of the shelterless throng.

But the night was portentous, for it was decreed that the march should end on the morrow, though of this the marchers were as yet unaware. At four in the morning it was resumed, and the moving mass of heroic men swung forward into their stride, covering the ground at a splendid pace, and, laden as they were, without waggons, and without food, they travelled the distance between Greylingstad and Balfour, 13 miles, in  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours. Upon reaching the latter place without any police escort, just before 9 a.m., it became evident that the last stage had been reached, for three special trains were drawn up at the station to take back the strikers to Natal. Mr. Polok was approached by the Police Officer in charge of the arrangements, and by Mr. Chamney, to co-operate with them in effecting the arrest of the "army," and upon receiving their assurance that the men were really to be sent to Natal, where criminal proceedings were await-

ing them, he replied that he would gladly do so as the whole object of the march had thus been fulfilled, and his own responsibility ceased. At the same time, he offered himself for arrest also, but he was informed that the Government did not desire this. He, however, warned the officials that, in Mr. Gandhi's enforced absence it might be difficult for him to induce compliance with their desire, as but few of the men had ever seen him before. Mr. Gandhi, however, was passing through from Heideberg en-route for Dundee, where he was subsequently imprisoned, and sent a message urging the people quietly to surrender.

They were fed as rapidly as food could be supplied to them—a handful of rice and bread each—and then Mr. Chamney, having questioned them as to their proofs of rights of residence, proclaimed them prohibited immigrants. For the moment, chaos prevailed, as a number of stalwarts, who had set their hearts upon reaching Johannesburg, called upon the multitude to march forward, but instantly realising the danger of this movement which, whilst it would have resulted in bloodshed, would have swept aside the small band of twenty-five policemen in the twinkling of an eye and let loose an uncontrolled body of men to roam over the Transvaal, who would not afterwards probably have been located. Mr. Polak, followed by Messrs. Cachalia and Bhyat, rushed to the head of the column and implored the people to remember that their object, as passive resisters, was not Johannesburg but gaol, and eventually peace was restored.

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Gradually, and in small groups, the men entrained Mr. Polak accompanying the first train as far as Charles-town, where he was shortly afterwards arrested. Here, the strikers having been locked up without food or water for eight hours, the trains were not allowed to remain more than a couple of minutes, the platform being occupied by armed police, who kept back the women that had remained there and now urged their menfolk, with tears in their eyes and choking voices, not to mind them but to remain true to their duty. And slowly the trains steamed south, bearing nearly two thousand humble heroes to a bitter fate and a shameful experience, but firm in the knowledge that they had done what they had set out to do, and that the repeal of the hated tax was now certain. The great and impressive march was over.

The *Times* has since declared that it must live in memory as one of the most remarkable manifestations in history of the spirit of Passive Resistance. It had achieved all that its organisers, in their fondest dreams, had hoped for it. It had proclaimed, as nothing else could have done, the stubborn endurance, the dogged persistency, the grim tenacity, the stern determination, the magnificent self-sacrifice of the Passive Resisters. And it assured success. It was not a defeat, as the shallow critics had at the time proclaimed it. Had the strikers not exercised, under the guidance of trusted leaders, immense self-control—there was no pillage, no disorder, no violence—all the forces that the Government had brought against them could not have prevented their

swarming over the Transvaal. But it was the glorious ending of a peaceful demonstration of workers determined upon achieving freedom for themselves, their wives, their children. A splendid victory for Truth had been won. The honour of the Indian Motherland had been vindicated. Mr. Gokhale's word had been made good.

And the sign of this is to be found in the work of Messrs. Andrews and Pearson, the report of the Commission, its acceptance by the Government, the debates in Parliament, and the passing of Act 22 of 1914, repealing the £3 Tax for ever and granting freedom of residence in Natal to those who choose to remain unindentured. The real victory is that of the soul-force of the marchers, starving, weary, but buoyed up with unconquerable hope, over the brute-force of those who had declared their intention at all costs to maintain them in a condition of perpetual helotage."

Thus ended the great march. The majesty of the law was once more vindicated by the arrest, trial and imprisonment of thousands. Mr. Gandhi himself who as the account quoted above mentions, had been arrested at Volksrust and released on bail, was subsequently tried and sentenced to fifteen months. At the trial he delivered himself as follows:—

Addressing the Court at Volksrust, Mr. Gandhi said that he had given the Minister of the Interior due notice of his intention to cross the border with the prohibited immigrants and had informed the Immigration officer at Volksrust of the date of crossing. He assured the Court

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that the present movement had nothing whatever to do with the unlawful entry of a single Indian for the purpose of residence in the Transvaal. He might fairly claim that during his whole career in the Transvaal he had been actuated by a desire to assist the Government in preventing surreptitious entry and unlawful settlement, but he pleaded guilty to knowingly committing an offence against the Section under which he was charged. He was aware that his action was fraught with the greatest risks and intense personal suffering to his followers. He was convinced that nothing short of much suffering would move the conscience of the Governor, or of the inhabitants of the Union, of which, in spite of this breach of the laws, he claimed to be a sane and law-abiding citizen.

The strike on the coal-mines had meanwhile spread to the sugar plantations in Natal. A savage attempt was made to suppress it and in the attempt some of the strikers were shot dead, and several injured.

The cup of suffering was now full to the brim. Resentment in India had reached white heat. The Government of India were alarmed at the situation. And Lord Hardinge then Viceroy of India, in his famous speech at Madras, placed himself at the head of Indian public opinion and asked for the appointment of a commission to institute a searching enquiry into the whole matter. The Imperial Authorities also bestirred themselves as they had never done before. And the authors of the policy which had led to such incalculable misery and bitterness now for the first time showed likewise



unmistakable signs of relenting by acceding to the demand for the commission of enquiry. But when it was actually constituted with Sir William Solomon as President, its composition rendered it so dubious that the Indian leaders resolved to ignore it altogether. It was at this crisis of affairs that the well-known missionary gentlemen, the Rev. Messrs. Andrews and Pearson, true children of the Man of sorrows paid a visit to South Africa and by their persistent endeavours in influential circles were able to diffuse a healing spirit. All is well that ends well. The findings of the Solomon commission were favourable to the Indian community on all points referred to it for report. Its recommendations were endorsed without reservation by the Union Government and given effect to by the subsequent passing of the Indians' Relief Act. This gave satisfaction to the Indian Community and Mr. Gandhi formally announced the closing of the struggle.

It will be interesting at this stage to take stock of the results achieved by the concentrated suffering of eight long years. But we shall miss its significance if we do not grasp clearly at the outset that the battle was from first to last a moral and spiritual one, and was waged not for the compassing of material ends but for the vindication of manhood. And from this point of view it surely realised its purpose in a measure that the great protagonists of the movement themselves could not at first have dreamed of. The struggle was the means, the struggle was the end. To those who have

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known the intensity of aspiration and elevation of character that made the fight possible the talk of material results must ever seem a pitiful meanness. Such have received the initiation of the highest self-knowledge. They have been face to face with that mood of the soul which sights nothing but endless horizons of spiritual endeavour and achievement. They have known that the life of the ordinary selfish man is not the real life but that deep within everyone high or low sleeps a heaven into which some day we shall all awake.

Furthermore they have created for their children and their children's children the priceless memory of a heroic past. And down to the remotest generations will linger the pride of how the forefathers braved the fury of the persecutor and staked their all for nothing but their own honour. Nay shall not the motherland herself treasure for ever the story of the deeds of the humblest of her children in a far away land as it has treasured the legend of Rama and Sita, or that of the Pandava brothers? Will not humanity itself the world over feel a quickened sense of its own divinity as it peruses the same golden record? Has not another chapter been added to the world's Acts of the Apostles?

Let us now reckon the tale of the martyrs to whom it was given to give their lives to the cause. There was that young girl, Valliamma of whom Mr. Gandhi has said: "Simple minded in faith she had not the knowledge that he had, she did not know what passive resistance was, she did not know what it was the community would

gain, but she was simply taken up with unbounded enthusiasm for her people—went to gaol, came out of it a wreck, and within a few days died.” There were the two youths for the tamil land, Nagapan and Narayana swamy—the former died shortly after his release from prison, and the latter at Delgoa Bay after having vainly attempted to land in South Africa as already told. And lastly there was the old man Harbatsingh, a Hindustani stalwart who went to gaol as a passive resister when he was seventy-five, and who when questioned by Mr. Gandhi why he had come, had answered. “What does it matter? I know what you are fighting for. You have not to pay the £3 tax but my fellow ex-indentured Indians have to pay that tax, and what more glorious death could I meet?” And he met his death in the gaol at Durban.

Coming lower down the scale, the feeling of contempt for the ‘coloured man’ which had so long possessed the white settlers had yielded place to one of respect and admiration. The instinct of race-superiority has been knocked out of at least the better mind of the Union. The principle of differentiation on racial grounds has disappeared. The livery of manhood shines in place of the badge of servitude. Unfading lustre has been reflected upon the name of the mother-country, and an invaluable contribution made to the life of Indian Nationalism.

And last but not least, the struggle has removed the mask from the small emaciated figure known to the

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world as Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, and set him before the world in his true lineaments—a moral giant, a spiritual hero, and a peerless soldier of God.

The material fruits of the struggle were in themselves by no means inconsiderable. The hated law which started the whole trouble was repealed. The £3 tax has been abolished. The recognition of Indian marriages has been secured. The system of indentured immigration has been put an end to. And most important of all, the passing of further laws intended to drive out the Indians from South Africa, which would certainly have followed, was nipped in the bud. But of none of these gains could it be said that it was wholly material.

There are still great disabilities under which the Indian resident of the Union has to labour. These we shall enumerate in the words of Mr. Gandhi himself: "There was still the gold law which had many a sting in it. There was still the Licensing laws throughout the Union which also contained many a sting. There was still a matter which the colonial born Indians could not understand or appreciate, namely, the water-tight compartments in which they had to live; whilst there was free inter-communication and inter-migration between the provinces for the Europeans, Indians had to be cooped up in their respective provinces. Then there was undue restraint on their trading activity. There was the prohibition as to their holding landed property in the Transvaal which was degrading and all these things

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took Indians into all sorts of undesirable channels. Further the Indians have yet to be admitted to the political franchise. The sympathy which takes an equal interest in all classes of the ruled is still far distant. And lastly the practical stoppage of immigration from India has deprived the South African Indians of that opportunity of living inter-course with the mother country which he cannot but value so highly. These and like wrongs will have to be set right in the future, God grant without the necessity of similar struggles !

The sense of triumph and rejoicing which marked the closing of the memorable struggle was mingled by the sadness of the thought that the great central figure, the genius and inspirer of the whole movement, the redeemer and Avatar of the Indian community in South Africa was soon to depart to the motherland for ever. Heightened a thousandfold was the pathos of farewell which in this case is best left to the imagination. His mission accomplished, the conquering hero returned to his native land in the faith, as he has said, that "it is in India that nearest approach to perfection is most possible."

The welcome accorded to Mr. Gandhi on his return home, was characterised by all the warmth, affection, and delicate reverence which India alone of all lands knows to offer to the great soul. Since his return to this country he has been mainly devoting himself to a personal study and comprehension of the problems with which a great and ancient civilisation in process of trans-

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tion to a new order necessarily teems. For this purpose, he has been going about from place to place, making the acquaintance of people of all grades and conditions, and coming into contact with the leaders of thought and activity. A man's character is written in his slightest acts and when during the early days of his arrival in this country, he was seen alighting from a third class compartment at Howrah station, while the elite of Calcutta, assembled on the platform, were making a search for him in the first and second-class compartments, almost a sensation was caused. This was no vanity of humility on his part but proceed from the firm resolve not to stain himself by any luxury which is not accessible to the poorest in the land. It was simply that passionate determination to one himself with the sorrows of the lowest and meanest of which his daily life is so eloquent an expression. And recently, he has become the fiery champion of the woes of the third-class passenger! In his eyes there is no wrong so trivial as to be unworthy of his earnest attention and striving. Such is the spirit that he has brought to the task of nation-making in this land.

There was again that incident at the opening of the Hindu University, when the platform was crowded with Rajahs and Maharajahs, and Mr. Gandhi made a speech at which several people left the meeting construing his words to be disloyal. It was sheer misunderstanding, as it afterwards turned out, of the spirit of a man whose whole life is a consuming effort to throw out of himself

the very seed of hatred and every slightest motion of mind or heart which could have the shadow of any reaction of evil.

The Champaran incident is still fresh in the mind of the public and requires no elaboration. He had gone there on invitation to undertake an enquiry as to the conditions of the labourers in the Indigo plantations and the treatment meted out to them by their employers. The District Magistrate of Champaran took it into his head that his presence was a serious danger to the district and would lead to a breach of the peace. And he had an order served upon Mr. Gandhi to the effect that the latter was to leave the district by the 'next available train.' Mr. Gandhi replied that he had come there out of a sense of duty and would stay and submit to the penalty of disobedience. At the trial that followed he simply pleaded guilty, and made a statement that he was faced by a conflict of duty, the duty of obeying the law and the duty of enquiry upon which he had come, and that under the circumstances he could only throw the responsibility of removing him on the administration. The Magistrate postponed judgment till some hours later in the day, and at the interview with the District Magistrate the same day he undertook not to go out to the village till instructions were received from the provincial administration. The case was adjourned to some days later, and the higher authorities subsequently issued instructions not to proceed with the prosecution. Some of the planters took the occasion to make a rapid attack upon Mr. Gandhi, but the

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recently published report of the Champaran commission of enquiry which was the immediate result of his visit has amply justified him.

The idea of a monster petition to the authorities from the people is not new in the modern political history of India. But when Mr. Gandhi revived the suggestion in connection with the Congress-Moslem-League scheme of reform, the moment was most opportune and the idea caught like magic. He himself undertook the propaganda in his own province of Gujarat and carried it out with characteristic thoroughness. The true patriot can never be idle, neither can he ever rest on his oars.

Mr. Gandhi firmly believes that a common language is indispensable for India's unification, and 'Hindi' is in his opinion best fitted to serve this purpose. And accordingly it is one of the objects of the Satyagrahasrama to promote and popularise the use of this vernacular as a medium of communication all over the country. And one of Mr. Gandhi's sons has recently settled at Madras and opened classes in Hindi. The life of the practical idealist is ever full of striking episodes and object-lessons. And when in April last Mr. Gandhi at the Delhi War Conference opened his address in English and closed it in Hindi, a thrill must have passed over that august assemblage, as of something sublimely audacious and unconventional.

Mr. Gandhi's now famous 'fast' is too fresh in the minds of our countrymen to require more than a passing



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mention. The millhands in Ahmedabad struck work and demanded an increase of wages which their masters refused to give. Mr. Gandhi appeared on the scene and strove to bring about an amicable settlement, but all his efforts were in vain. He thereupon decided and declared his resolve, to abstain from all food, and fast to death, if need be, till the matter should be satisfactorily settled. And after he had fasted for some days (three days, we believe,) the millowners relented and acceded to the demands of the workers, and the strike and the fast came to an end.

The first great and memorable movement inspired by Mr. Gandhi in India was undeniably the passive resistance movement in Kaira which came to an end but some months ago. To give anything like an adequate account of this movement would require a volume by itself. Here we can deal with it only in its barest outlines. There was serious and wide spread failure of crops in the district of Karia, in Guzerat, in the year 1916---1917. It was a calamity of the first magnitude. Under the revenue rules the ryots were entitled to suspension of the full revenue for one year if the yield was less than four annas in the rupee, and to half-suspension, if it was between four annas and six annas. Now the authorities granted full suspension in the case of one village only out of a total of 600 villages, half-suspension with regard to 104 villages, and issued orders for the collection of the full revenue with regard to the rest. It was claimed on behalf of the ryots that

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the Government was wrong in its estimate of the out-turn, and that the relief granted was utterly inadequate to meet the requirements of the situation. Mr. Gandhi, Mr. V. J. Patel and others conducted an enquiry with regard to the vast majority of villages and invited the Government to appoint a Committee or do something to ascertain the true extent and dimensions of the calamity. They interviewed the authorities, major and minor, held meetings, passed resolutions. But petition, prayer and protest were of no avail. The collection of revenue with the aid of coercive processes went merrily on. It was now that Mr. Gandhi sounded amidst the poor illiterate peasants of Kaira the trumpet of Satyagraha. His was now the same ringing call for the assertion of manhood which he had uttered to his compatriots in South Africa. What was the problem as it presented itself to the mind of Mr. Gandhi? Was it simply a question of securing for the ryots an year's respite from the payment of revenue? By no means. To him the problem was far deeper, it was moral and spiritual. The Government was in this case in the wrong, and the governed in the right; and the former had treated the representations of the latter with cool disdain. On the one side the Almighty Sircar, on the other the dumb ryots cowering in abject terror—how long was this to go on? The ryots must learn to shake off their mortal dread of the Sircar and feel themselves to be entities. And how were they to do it? Not by disorder, not by rebellion, but by wielding that most potent of all weapons—the weapon not of the weak but of the

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spiritually strong—the weapon of suffering. No power can deprive a man of his right and privilege of suffering. And by suffering, suffering and suffering to the uttermost, powers and principalities shall be overthrown. It is in this faith that Mr. Gandhi lives and works. It is this gospel that he now preached to the Kaira peasants. “Don’t pay the revenue; submit to all penalties. Hold fast to truth. Enter the kingdom Satyagraha” was his exhortation to them. And the response elicited showed that these peasants had the same stuff of heroism in them, the same perception of spiritual truths, the same instinct of idealism and the same readiness to sacrifice all for an idea that had distinguished the passive resisters in South Africa. About 2,500 of the ryots, men and women, took the vow of Satyagraha and declined to pay the revenue. The authorities on their part coaxed and threatened in turn. A relentless campaign of attachments was set on foot. Cattle, domestic utensils, ornaments, whatever chattels available, were put under writ. But the spirit of the passive resisters continued unshaken. Wisdom dawned upon the authorities at last, and they issued orders that the collection of the revenue would be suspended for a year, and that at the same time the Government expected payment from such as were able to pay. The attachments were withdrawn and the struggle closed amidst scenes of pathos and rejoicing. England is proud of its Pymys and Hampdens. What cause for pride has India not got in the heroism of these humble

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peasants of Kaira who embraced suffering in a mood and spirit to which the Pym's and Hampdens of English History were strangers?

One of the most pregnant acts of his in India has been the establishment of the Satyagrahashrama at Ahmedabad which Mr. Gandhi has made his home and the chief centre of all his activities. Here, in the Ashrama, within the plain walls of a very humble dwelling, there have gathered at the Mahatma's feet an earnest and courageous band of disciples who have taken the vows of fearlessness, truth-speaking, celibacy abstemiousness, of honesty, of encouraging Swadeshi industry and lastly of redeeming the untouchables of India. As its very name signifies the Ashrama stands for and upholds, in principle as well as practice, truth as the highest consideration of all, truth in thought, word and deed. The very encouraging response which Mr. Gandhi's call for sincere, devoted and selfless workers met with, was an ample and convincing proof, if proof were wanted at the time, of the political quickening in India and the growing determination on the part of the people to speak out their solemn protests against the indignities, the insults and the injustice done to them by an arrogant and unfeeling bureaucracy.

It is impossible to avoid drawing here a comparison between the Satyagrahashrama of Mr. Gandhi and the Servants of India Society founded more than a decade ago by Mr. Gokhale. These two institutions which each represent successive phases of political thought are them-

selves the embodiment of the personality of their respective founders and differ as greatly. The Poona organisation was one calculated to teach, inform and criticise and thus had for its object the purely intellectual side of national work. The Ahmedabad home on the other hand was the result of a prophet's desire to preach to, evangelise and purify an inherently vicious social and political organisation and thus it has addressed itself to the spiritual side of national reconstruction. While the members of the Servants of India Society have to digest Committee reports, Budget estimates and Blue books for fulfilling their mission, the members of the Satyagrahashrama do by their very life and character set an inspiring example and preach the ever-abiding gospel of truth, purity, simplicity, non-violence and the supreme importance of conserving and cherishing national virtues to an almost denationalised race. Long ago, it is told, one of the Brothers of the Order in a Franciscan monastery in a French Town went out to preach accompanied by a novitiate. The friar had a long walk through the streets of the town and afterwards retraced his steps to the monastery. The novitiate who had followed him, expecting him to preach, asked in all disappointment why he had not preached. "Preach!" said the holy friar "that is what we have been doing during all our walk. Our very presence has been a sermon to the people." And such is the existence of the founder and disciples of the Satyagrahashrama. Their very life is an inspiring homily to us and a call to a

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higher, purer, nobler and a more thoroughly national life.

In the troublous times that were soon to overtake India there was all the need for men of the intrepid courage of Mr. Gandhi to champion the cause of India's freedom. The Viceroyalty of Lord Chelmsford during the quinquennium 1916 to 1921 has been remarkable for nothing else than that during this period all previous record of bureaucratic despotism was broken and irresponsible oppression allowed to run riot in the land to an unprecedented degree. When Lord Hardinge handed over charge to Lord Chelmsford, India which had poured forth millions of men and money in the cause of the British Empire and had at a tremendous sacrifice saved the situation for the Allies in the Great War in Flanders, was above all suspicion of being disloyal and the internal condition of the country was one of absolute peace. Men were looking forward to the glorious dawn of a new epoch, when the high and noble principles of Justice, Equality and Freedom for which the Allies were reported to be fighting against the dark forces of Might, would be established beyond question for one and all on earth, white man or black, Oriental or Occidental, Christian or non-Christian, all alike. The idea of self-determination was in the air, Government by force was considered to have been laid in the grave, it was held that no people could be ruled by another state except with their free will and consent and even then for their benefit alone, and a speedy realisation of the legitimate aspirations towards freedom of a subject-people was to be the guiding principle in their

governance. So far as India was concerned these general notions were given a concrete and tangible shape in the now famous declaration of the 20th of August 1917 and the promise of responsible self-Government.

While India stood thus on the tiptoe of expectation for the new age of freedom that was about to dawn and while men conjured rosy visions of the future, Lord Chelmsford began his most retrograde Viceroyalty with this very bad principle as a settled policy of his namely, that the local officials should never be checked whatever their vagaries may be and that the "man on the spot" should be allowed to have his own way regardless of all the demands of justice, equity and good conscience. To this policy of Lord Chelmsford were certainly due the troubles in Champaran and Kaira to which reference has already been made. The local Governments were allowed to have their own arbitrary ways in passing orders of externment and internment heedless of public protests. The Press Act was used in a most tyrannical manner to gag the liberty of free speech and criticism. When the rights of personal freedom and free speech, rights which are most valued in any enlightened democracy, were thus denied to India, constitutional Government became illusory and the British Raj was hardly better than disposition of the worst type ever known to history.

As if these things had not been enough, Lord Chelmsford thought fit to appoint towards the close of December 1917, a commission presided over by Mr. Justice Rowlatt of the King's Bench Division to investigate and report on

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revolutionary conspiracies in India and to advise as to legislation which might better enable Government to deal effectively with them. The commission was appointed without any sort of compelling necessity and, to say the least of it, at a most inopportune moment. India had proved and proved to the hilt, her staunch sworn loyalty to the person and throne of His Majesty and if after three years of sustained war efforts this commission was to be flung in the face of India, well might public opinion think it to be the most deliberate insult offered to India as a whole. The commission held its sittings *in camera* at Calcutta and Lahore and after an one-sided and unjudicial enquiry published its report towards the close of April 1918. It suggested certain penal laws to be placed on the Statute book as a more effective and permanent safe-guard than the Defence of India Act and other war-time measures which could last only so long as the war continued. The report was emphatically protested against by every section of the public press ; but in spite of all popular opposition, Government drafted a bill substantially embodying the recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee and hurried it through the Imperial Legislative Council within six months of the publication of the report. The Act, it must be remembered, is a permanent addition to the Statute Book, war or no war, and the effect of its provisions is, to put shortly, that every person accused of a revolutionary crime is to be presumed to be guilty unless he proves the contrary ; the procedure is to be as summary as it could possibly be made and from the



decision of the tribunals specially appointed for this purpose no appeal could be preferred.

Against such a cruel, tyrannical and unjust measure the whole of India protested with one voice. Mr. Gandhi earnestly besought the Viceroy to desist from inserting this new thorn into the flesh of India. He travelled all over the country to conduct a campaign of opposition. He appealed to the fair name of England, the Britisher's love of Justice, he pleaded that India deserved far better for her war services, and that to pass the legislation was to stigmatise India and deny to Indian subjects the fundamental rights which the Magna Charta had secured to every Englishman for all time, and the American Declaration of Independence to every subject of the United states. Public feeling was in a state of high ferment and yet in spite of all this, and in spite of the fact that every non-official member of the Imperial Legislative Council, without a single exception, solemnly lodged his protest and voted against the proposed measure, the deities of Simla who had willed it at first, enacted the bill into Law and Law of the land it is to this day.

The stubborn and impervious attitude of Lord Chelmsford's Government which remained proof against all entreaties, prayers and protests was a blunt and rude intimation of the truth so often repeated in history that an alien government will never rule according to the wishes of the subject people. The situation in India had now reached a state of very high tension. A most

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unmistakable and unanimous declaration of the popular will was imperatively necessary to convince the Government in India and every Englishman abroad that the process of forging fetters should come to an end. It was unjust and immoral that 315 millions people should be ruled as if they were stocks and stones, not sentient beings whose wishes ought to be consulted in matters affecting their most sacred and personal rights of freedom. If the 315 million people disapproved of the unjust and tyrannical law the only way to nullify the Government's obstinate act was to simply ignore that and other similar iniquitous laws and refuse to obey them.

Mr. Gandhi rightly held that the only effective means for this purpose was Passive Resistance. To resort to the methods and instruments of force in contending with an unpopular Government is a crude barbarous and imperfect method of operation. It as certainly brutalises the defenders of freedom as it hardens still more the hard-hearted oppressor. Physical violence not only embitters the rulers and the ruled, it blocks the way to mutual understanding and makes rapprochement an impossibility in the end. To fight the way out with the absolutely non-violent weapons of passive resistance, would lead to a peaceful settlement, the final vindication of justice and a moral victory. And so Mr. Gandhi felt bound to start afresh the campaign of Satyagraha and large numbers freely and gladly took the pledge of civil disobedience to all the harsh and oppressive laws which an alien bureaucracy

had forced down the throat of India. A committee was formed to concert the programme and to draft a list of all those tyrannical laws which were to be disobeyed.

What followed is writ large in characters of fire and blood in the pages of Indian history. The Lieutenant-Governor of the Panjab, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, took it into his head to start a counter-campaign of repression. Drs. Kitchelew and Satyapal two popular and trusted leaders were arrested and Mr. Gandhi who proceeded to the Panjab from Bombay was prohibited from entering the province, arrested and sent back to Bombay. By their stupid and senseless action, the Government exasperated and infuriated the populace. Disorder broke out, martial law was proclaimed, and scores of persons were illegally hauled before the martial law tribunals. Counsel for defence were disallowed to appear and the unfortunate victims were all sentenced to death with one exception. When the civil population of Amritsar convened a public meeting at the Jallianwalla Bagh to protest against some of the high-handed and tyrannous measures of the Punjab Government, the military were ordered to open fire on the harmless and defenceless crowd of men, women and children. This was not all. In the name of public tranquility aeroplanes bombed the civil population from above and men were made to crawl on their bellies as a sign of penitent submission !

The atrocious conduct of the Panjab authorities met with the full approval of Lord Chelmsford. Indignant public opinion demanded a thorough and sifting enquiry into

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the Panjab atrocities and in compliance with the insistent public demand, Mr. Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, appointed the Hunter Committee to investigate and report on the Panjab disorders. The Indian National Congress deputed a Committee of its own members to conduct an independent enquiry and the report of this committee which was published shortly before that of the other, contained a trenchant denunciation of the most cold blooded atrocities committed by those in authority in the Panjab. The official report, as was only to be expected, attempted at whitewash and while it said that perhaps there had been some excessive use of military force, the situation that had to be dealt with was so serious that nothing but the drastic measures adopted could have saved the empire!

The matter was agitated in Parliament and the staunch friends of India there tried their best to get Justice done to India. The Secretary of State expressed his confidence in the Viceroy, the Viceroy expressed his confidence in Sir M. O'Dwyer and Sir M. O'Dwyer in turn fully endorsed the deeds of General Dyer to whom he had given *carte blanche*. The last named individual who openly gloried in the performance of the bloody massacre at Jallianwalla Bag was hailed on all sides by the reactionary jingoes of the Sydenham party as the saviour of India!

Simultaneously with these arbitrary and high handed proceedings a fresh grievance was added to the list of Indian wrongs, a grievance especially to every member of the Muslim faith. At the end of the Great War

Mr. Lloyd George, Prime-minister of England replying to Indian representations on behalf of Turkey, assured Islam that Turkey would have justice. When peace came to be concluded the terms meted out to Turkey were hardly such as could be tolerated by any self-respecting power; the Khilafat, the supreme temporal and spiritual power in Islam was bedraggled in the dust and Mr. Lloyd George said, sardonically, that Turkey had had justice done to her. Protestations were of no avail, Lord Chelmsford said that he could do nothing in a matter which rested entirely with the British Cabinet and Mr. Lloyd George, who delights in a joke, sincerely assured India that as Justice had been promised so justice was rendered to Turkey.

The callousness of the rulers of the land to the universal and most strongly felt wishes of the people was thus repeatedly brought to light in the most unmistakable manner. The obduracy of the Government in forcing the Rowlatt Act through the Legislature in the teeth of all opposition laid bare the irreconcilable and permanent cleavage between a foreign bureaucracy and the subject people. The manifestly partisan interest which Lord Chelmsford showed in failing to visit with proper punishments the O'Dwyers, Dyers, Bosworth Smiths and other miscreants who were responsible for the gruesome tragedy enacted in the Panjab, betrayed to every patriotic Indian the ugly fact that no justice could ever be done between the governing class and the governed so long as an irresponsible foreign bureau-

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cracy dominated the land. The relentless attitude adopted towards Turkey in the settlement of the Peace terms afforded a painful proof of the fact that to the alien Government even considerations of good faith and the religious sentiments of a whole people, unanimously expressed, were of no significance whatsoever.

The educated mind of India was now left in no manner of doubt as regards the real value of the Government's solicitude for the well being and happiness of 315 millions of human beings whose care and custody had been taken in trust by itself. Three most crucial tests had shown the complete inability of the Government to appreciate the view-point of the masses and to shape its policy as dictated by popular opinion. The "mailed fist" which had been crushed to pulp and put out of action in Europe appeared in a more insidious form in India and upholders of the "shining armour" theory (discredited only if Germans) were not wanting to sing a *Te Deum* for the glorious victories in the Punjab!

By their crass indifference to the feelings and prayers of the whole nation the Government had managed to pierce the soul of every right-minded and patriotic Indian. The need for Satyagraha was all the greater now under the appalling circumstances above detailed and it was with a heart oppressed with gloom and seared by disappointment in British statesmanship that Mr. Gandbi organised anew and led the passive resistance movement, now generally styled, Non-Co-operation. As the disease it was calculated

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to eradicate had revealed itself to be far more deep-seated, chronic and formidable than at first supposed, so now the cure had to be planned on more systematic and thorough lines. Mr. Gandhi submitted a scheme of work to the special session of the Indian National Congress held at Calcutta in September 1920 which approved of and endorsed the Non-Co-operation movement. It was thought by the Moderate secessionists that the Calcutta Congress did not adequately represent the view of the country and that Mr. Gandhi had unfairly managed to pack the Congress with a view to obtain a verdict favourable to his movement. These blind critics had never gauged the real worth and greatness of Mahatma Gandhi who would be the last person on earth to resort to any trick or subterfuge whatever under any circumstances. The regular session of the Congress which was held at Nagpur in December 1920 further approved of the Calcutta decision and furnished the completest and most decisive answer to those who tried to make out that the real mind of India had not spoken at the earlier session.

The movement is now in full swing over the whole country. To those who would like to note the progress of the movement week by week, the pages of "Young India" which Mr. Gandhi took over and is publishing as the organ of Non-Co-operation, will afford the most complete and authoritative information. With the details of the movement we are, strictly speaking, not

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concerned here. The movement which was at first pooh-poohed by the Government and the choir of adulatory Co-operators soon began to spread in the country. The Government had thought Indians to be incapable of self-sacrifice and self-denial. It had never dreamed that Indians could and would give up the advantages, preferments and honours of Government service, the law courts, aided schools, and the legislative councils. The determination of India to rather suffer patiently than consent to the unjust and unconscionable measures of an unsympathetic Government, effectively disposed of the fiction that India could be ruled interminably without the least regard for the wishes of the people. When Non-Co-operation, at first considered a ridiculous programme, soon came into the region of practical politics, the detractors of the movement began to shift their grounds of criticism and argue that as the country had not yet established national institutions of education and national judicial tribunals, the movement was premature and harmful to the best interests of the country. The starting of the Gujarat Vidyapitha, a national University in every sense of the term, and of a number of national high schools and colleges all over the country, the establishment of arbitration courts and the starting of handloom factories furnished a practical refutation of the second set of objections. The case against Non-Co-operation has been thus completely disproved and the fetish of dependence on and the necessity of Government support has been shattered once for all.



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What the future of the Non-Co-operation movement is going to be, rests entirely in the hands of Lord Reading the in-coming Viceroy. About what it has actually accomplished there can be no doubt. It has certainly added to the stature and dignity of India which to-day, thanks to Mr. Gandhi's noble lead and exalted ideals, occupies the unique position of being the almost solitary upholder of the principles of Truth, Gentleness and Love amid a circle of nations, still hoarse with crying for armaments, the spoils of war and political aggrandisement. It would certainly have ill become the religion and civilisation of India to have sanctioned or approved of the use of physical force in attaining the goal of her political aspirations. In choosing and adopting the spiritual means of non-co-operation for the desired end India was doing nothing but what was consistent with her hoary traditions of strict adherence to Satya, Dharma and Ahimsa. The one guide and prophet who realised that India was in peril of falling into the abyss of European *unculture* and who insisted on her immediately withdrawing from the brink of the awful precipice was Mr. Gandhi.

In the foregoing pages it has been attempted to set forth some of the most salient incidents in the life of Mr. Gandhi and the times he has passed through, without extensive portrayal of, or much comment on, his character and the value of the services he has rendered to the country of his birth. As he certainly would wish, we should judge of him by the intentions of the man and his actual deeds. No other son of India has suffered so

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much or so long and patiently for her sake and for the rectification of her wrongs as Mr. Gandhi has done. No other has shown to the world what the innate, the essential and the immutable nature of the Soul of India is. And certainly no other Indian has had a truer and a deeper vision of India's appointed mission in the roll of History or has proclaimed it with greater clearness and precision than Mr. Gandhi has done. For Mr. Gandhi is no mere politician. He is to be counted rather with the prophets and apostles of the World.

It were no easy task to find a compeer for Mr. Gandhi, a person worthy of comparison with him in every sense. Mazzini, the leader of "Young Italy" bears but a surface resemblance to him; his approval of violence and *conspiracy* as a desirable means of political deliverance would have shocked and repulsed Mr. Gandhi. None of the other famous leaders of political revolution, the Robespierres, Dantons and Marats, the Cromwells, Garibaldis and Bolívars can even be thought of. As the eye searches again and again the pages of history to find at least one champion of Freedom who in point of character and moral worth could bear comparison with Mr. Gandhi, the one name which arrests our attention is that of Washington. Despite the fact that Washington was a leader of an army of insurgent Colonists, there is at bottom a substantial similarity between him and Mr. Gandhi. The same simplicity, gentleness, love of truth and

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rectitude, firmness of resolve, perfect abhorrence of tyrannical laws, high sense of duty, utter selflessness and a heart aglow with the love of the motherland characterise both the great American patriot and the revered leader of India. And as grateful prosperity has acknowledged the invaluable services of Washington to the United States of America, so shall generation after generation of Indians in ages to come bless and revere the name of Mr. Gandhi and justly call him "the Father of his Country."

SPEECHES AND WRITINGS  
OF  
MAHATMA GANDHI

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GANDHI'S SENSE OF DUTY

*[The following exhortation was addressed by Mr. M. K. Gandhi to the Tamil community of South Africa] :—*

Remember that we are descendants, of Prahlad and Sudhanva, both passive resisters of the purest type. They disregarded the dictates even of their parents, when they were asked to deny God. They suffered extreme torture rather than inflict suffering on their persecutors. We in the Transvaal are being called upon to deny God, in that we are required to deny our manhood, go back upon our oath, and accept an insult to our nation. Shall we, in the present crisis, do less than our fore-fathers?

## GANDHI'S CONFESSION OF FAITH

*[The following is an extract from a letter addressed by Mr. Gandhi to a friend in India] :—*

(1) There is no impassable barrier between East and West.

(2) There is no such thing as Western or European civilization but there is a modern civilization, which is purely material.

(3) The people of Europe, before they were touched by modern civilization, had much in common with the people of the East; anyhow the people of India, and even to-day Europeans who are not touched by Modern civilization are far better able to mix with Indians than the offspring of that civilization.

(4) It is not the British people who are ruling India, but it is modern civilization, through its railways, telegraph, telephone, and almost every invention which has been claimed to be a triumph of civilization.

(5) Bombay, Calcutta, and the other chief cities of India are real plague spots.

(6) If British rule was replaced to-morrow by Indian rule based on modern methods, India would be no better, except that she would be able then to retain some of the money that is drained away to England; but then India would only become a second or fifth edition of Europe or America.

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(7) East and West can only and really meet where the West has thrown overboard\* modern civilization almost in its entirety. They can also seemingly meet when East has also adopted modern civilization, but that meeting would be an armed truce, even as it is between say, Germany and England, both of which nations are living in the Hall of Death in order to avoid being devoured the one by the other.

(8) It is simply impertinence for any man or any body of men to begin or contemplate reform of the whole world. To attempt to do so by means of highly artificial and speedy locomotion, is to attempt the impossible.

(9) Increase of material comforts, it may be generally laid down, does not in any way whatsoever conduce to moral growth.

(10) Medical Science is the concentrated essence of Black Magic. Quackery is infinitely preferable to what passes for high medical skill.

(11) Hospitals are the instruments that the Devil has been using for his own purpose, in order to keep his hold on his Kingdom. They perpetuate vice, misery, and degradation and real slavery. I was entirely off the track when I considered that I should receive a medical training. It would be sinful for me in any way whatsoever to take part in the abominations that go on in the hospitals. If there were no hospitals for venereal diseases, or even for consumptives, we should have less consumption, and less sexual vice amongst us.

(12) India's salvation consists in unlearning wha

she has learnt during the past fifty years. The railways, telegraphs, hospitals, lawyers, doctors, and such like have all to go, and the so-called upper classes have to learn to live consciously and religiously and deliberately the simple peasant life, knowing it to be a life-giving, true happiness.

(13) India should wear no machine-made clothing, whether it comes out of European mills or Indian mills.

(14) England can help India to do this, and then she will have justified her hold on India. There seem to be many in England to-day who think likewise.

(15) There was true wisdom in the sages of old having so regulated society as to limit the material condition of the people; the rude plough of perhaps five thousand years ago is the plough of husbandman to-day. Therein lies salvation. People live long under such conditions, in comparative peace much greater than Europe has enjoyed after having taken up modern activity, and I feel that every enlightened man, certainly every Englishman, may, if he chooses, learn this truth and act according to it.

It is the true spirit of passive resistance that has brought me to the above almost definite conclusions. As a passive resister, I am unconcerned whether such a gigantic reformation, shall I call it, can be brought about among people who find their satisfaction from the present mad rush. If I realize the truth of it, I should

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rejoice in following it, and therefore I could not wait until the whole body of people had commenced. All of us who think likewise have to take the necessary step, and the rest, if we are in the right, must follow. The theory is there : our practice will have to approach it as much as possible. Living in the midst of the rush, we may not be able to shake ourselves free from all taint. Every time I get into a railway car or use a motor-bus, I knew that I am doing violence to my sense of what is right. I do not fear the logical result on that basis. The visiting of England is bad, and any communication between South Africa and India by means of ocean-grey hounds is also bad, and so on. You and I can, and may, outgrow these things in our present bodies, but the chief thing is to put our theory right. You will be seeing there all sorts and conditions of men. I therefore feel that I should no longer withhold from you what I call the progressive step I have taken mentally. If you agree with me, then it will be your duty to tell the revolutionaries and every body else that the freedom they want, or they think they want, is not to be obtained by killing people or doing violence, but by setting themselves right, and by becoming and remaining truly Indian. Then the British rulers will be servants and not masters. They will be trustees, and not tyrants, and they will live in perfect peace with the whole of the inhabitants of India. The future therefore, lies not with the British race, but with the Indians themselves, and if they have sufficient self-abnega-



tion and abstemiousness, they can make themselves free this very moment, and when we have arrived in India at the simplicity which is still ours largely and which was ours entirely until a few years ago, it will still be possible for the best Indians and the best Europeans to see one another throughout the length and breadth of India, and act as the leaven. When there was no rapid locomotion, teachers and preachers went on foot, from one end of the country to the other, braving all dangers, not for pleasure, not for recruiting their health, (though all that followed from their tramps) but for the sake of humanity. Then were Benares and other places of pilgrimage holy cities, whereas to-day they are an abomination.

You will recollect, you used to hate me for talking to my children in Guzerati. I now feel more and more convinced that I was absolutely right in refusing to talk to them in English. Fancy a Guzerati writing to another Guzerati in English! which, as you would properly say, he mispronounces, and writes ungrammatically. I should certainly never commit the ludicrous blunders in writing in Guzerati that I do in writing or speaking in English. I think that when I speak in English to an Indian or a foreigner I in a measure unlearn the language. If I want to learn it well, and if I want to attune my ear to it, I can only do so by talking to an Englishman and by listening to an Englishman speaking.

## GANDHI'S PLEA FOR THE SOUL.

*[The following is an extract from a letter of the London correspondent of the Amrita Bazar Patrika, summarising an address delivered by Mr. Gandhi before the members of the Emerson Club and of the Hampstead Branch of the Peace and Arbitration Society whilst in London]:—*

Mr Gandhi turned to India, and spoke with enthusiasm of Rama, the victim of the machinations of a woman choosing fourteen year's exile rather than surrender ; other Orientals were mentioned, and then, through the Doukhobors of to-day, he brought the thoughts of the audience to the soul resistance of Indians *versus* brute force in South Africa. He insisted that it was completely a mistake to believe that Indians were incapable of lengthened resistance for a principle ; in their fearlessness of suffering they were second to none in the world. Passive resistance had been called a weapon of the weak, but Mr. Gandhi maintained that it required courage higher than that of a soldier on the battle-field, which was often the impulse of the moment, for passive resistance was continuous and sustained ; it meant physical suffering. Some people were inclined to think it too

difficult to be carried out to-day, but those who held that idea were not moved by true courage. Again referring to Oriental teaching, Mr. Gandhi said that the teaching of the "Lord's Song" was, from the beginning, the necessity of fearlessness. He touched on the question of physical force while insisting that it was not thought of by Indians in the Transvaal. He does not want to share in liberty for India that is gained by violence and bloodshed, and insists that no country is so capable as India of wielding soul force. Mr. Gandhi did not approve of the militant tactics of the suffragates for the reason that they were meeting body force with body force, and not using the higher power of soul force; violence begets violence. He maintained, too, that the association of Britain and India must be a mutual benefit, if India—eschewing violence—did not depart from her proud position of being the giver and the teacher of religion. "If the world believes in the existence of the soul," he said in conclusion, "it must be recognised that soul force is better than body force: it is the sacred principle of love which moves mountains. To us is the responsibility of living out this sacred law; we are not concerned with results."

Mr. Gandhi protested against the mad rush of to-day and, instead of blessing the means by which modern science has made this mad rush possible, that is, railways, motors, telegraph, telephone, and even the coming flying-machines, he declared that they were diverting man's thoughts from the main purpose of life; bodily comfort

### *Gandhi's Plea for the Soul.*

stood before soul growth ; man had no time to-day even to know himself ; he preferred a newspaper or sport or other things rather than to be left alone with himself for thought. He claimed Ruskin as on his side in this expression to protest against the drive and hurry of modern civilisation. He did not describe this development of material science as exclusively British, but he considered that its effect in India had been baneful in many ways. He instanced the desecration of India's holy places, which he said were no longer holy for the "fatal facility" of locomotion had brought to those places people whose only aim was to defraud the unsophisticated ; such people in the olden days when pilgrimages meant long wearisome walking through jungles, crossing rivers, and encountering many dangers, had not the stamina to reach the goal. Pilgrimages in those days could only be undertaken by the cream of society, but they came to know each other, the aim of the holy places was to make India holy. Plague and famine which existed in pre-British days were local then ; to-day, locomotion had caused them to spread. To avoid the calamity which intense materialism must bring, Mr. Gandhi urged that India should go back to her former holiness, which is not yet lost. The contact with the West has awakened her from the lethargy into which she had sunk ; the new spirit, if properly directed, would bring blessings to both nations and to the world. If India adopted Western modern civilisation as Japan had done, there must be perpetual conflict and gasping between Briton and

Indian. If, on the other hand, India's ancient civilisation can withstand this latest assault, as it has withstood so many before, and be, as of old, the religious teacher, the spiritual guide, then there would be no impassable barrier between East and West. Some circumstances exist, said Mr. Gandhi, which we cannot understand; but the main purpose of life is to live rightly, think rightly, act rightly; but the soul must languish when we give all our thought to the body.

## THE DUTIES OF BRITISH CITIZENSHIP

I consider myself a lover of the British Empire, a citizen (though voteless) of the Transvaal, prepared to take my full share in promoting the general well-being of the country. And I claim it to be perfectly honourable and consistent with the above profession to advise my countrymen not to submit to the Asiatic Act, as being derogatory to their manhood and offensive to their religion. And I claim, too, that the method of passive resistance adopted to combat the mischief is the clearest and safest, because, if the cause is not true, it is the resisters, and they alone who suffer. I am perfectly aware of the danger to good government, in a country inhabited by many races unequally developed, in an honest citizen advising resistance to a law of the land. But I refuse to believe in the infallibility of legislators, I do believe that they are not always guided by generous or even just sentiments in their dealings with unrepresented classes. I venture to say, that, if passive resistance is generally accepted, it will once and for ever avoid the contingency of a terrible death-struggle and bloodshed in the event (not impossible) of

*Mahatma Gandhi.*

the natives being exasperated by a stupid mistake of our legislators.

It has been said that those who do not like the law may leave the country. This is all very well spoken from a cushioned chair, but it is neither possible nor becoming for men to leave their homes because they do not subscribe to certain laws enacted against them. The inlanders of the Boer regime complained of harsh laws; they, too, were told that if they did not like them they could retire from the country. Are Indians, who are fighting for their self-respect, to slink away from the country for fear of suffering imprisonment or worse? If I could help it, nothing would remove Indians from the country save brute force. It is no part of a citizen's duty to pay blind obedience to the laws imposed on him. And if my countrymen believe in God and the existence of the soul, then, while they may admit that their bodies belonged to the state to be imprisoned and deported, their minds, their wills, and their souls must ever remain free like the birds of the air, and are beyond the reach of the swiftest arrow.—(*Indian Opinion*).

## THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE

[*The following is reproduced from the Golden Number of the Indian Opinion, 1914:*]—

I shall be at least far away from Phoenix, if not actually in the Motherland, when this Commemoration Issue is published. I would, however, leave behind me my innermost thoughts upon that which has made this special issue necessary. Without Passive Resistance, there would have been no richly illustrated and important special issue of *Indian Opinion*, which has, for the last eleven years, in an unpretentious and humble manner, endeavoured to serve my countrymen and South Africa, a period covering the most critical stage that they will perhaps ever have to pass through. It marks the rise and growth of Passive Resistance, which has attracted world-wide attention. The term does not fit the activity of the Indian community during the past eight years. Its equivalent in the vernacular, rendered into English, means Truth-Force. I think Tolstoy called it also Soul-Force or Love-Force, and so it is. Carried out to its utmost limit, this force is independent of pecuniary or



other material assistance ; certainly, even in its elementary form, of physical force or violence. Indeed, violence is the negation of this great spiritual force, which can only be cultivated or wielded by those who will entirely eschew violence. It is force that may be used by individuals as well as by communities. It may be used as well in political as in domestic affairs, Its universal applicability is a demonstration of its permanence and invincibility. It can be used alike by men, women, and children. It is totally untrue to say that it is a force to be used only by the weak so long as they are not capable of meeting violence by violence. This superstition arises from the incompleteness of the English expression. It is impossible for those who consider themselves to be weak to apply this force. Only those who realise that there is something in man which superior to the brute nature in him, and that the latter always yields to it, can effectively be Passive Resisters. This force is to violence and therefore, to all tyranny, all injustice, what light is to darkness. In politics, its use is based upon the immutable maxim that government of the people is possible only so long as they consent either consciously or unconsciously to be governed. We did not want to be governed by the Asiatic Act of 1907 of the Transvaal, and it had to go before this mighty force. Two course were open to us—to use violence when we were called upon to submit to the Act, or to suffer the penalties prescribed under the Act, and thus to draw out and exhibit the force of the

*The Theory and Practice of Passive Resistance.*

soul within us for a period long enough to appeal to the sympathetic chord in the governors or the law-makers. We have taken long to achieve what we set about striving for. That was, because, our Passive Resistance was not of the most complete type. All Passive Resisters do not understand the full value of the force, nor have we, men, who always from conviction, refrain from violence. The use of this force requires the adoption of poverty, in the sense that we must be indifferent whether we have the wherewithal to feed or clothe ourselves. During the past struggle, all Passive Resisters, if any at all, were not prepared to go that length. Some again were only Passive Resisters so-called. They came without any conviction, often with mixed motives, less often with impure motives. Some even, whilst engaged in the struggle, would gladly have resorted to violence but for most vigilant supervision. Thus it was that the struggle became prolonged; for, the exercise of the purest soul-force, in its perfect form, brings about instantaneous relief. For this exercise, prolonged training of the individual soul is an absolute necessity, so that a perfect Passive Resister has to be almost, if not entirely, a perfect man. We cannot all suddenly become such men, but, if my proposition is correct—as I know it to be correct—the greater the spirit of Passive Resistance in us, the better men we will become. Its use, therefore, is, I think, indisputable, and it is a force which, if it became universal, would revolutionise social ideals and do away with despotisms

and the ever-growing militarism under which the nations of the West are groaning and are being almost crushed to death, and which fairly promise to overwhelm even the nations of the East. If the past struggle has produced even a few Indians who would dedicate themselves to the task of becoming Passive Resisters as nearly perfect as possible, they would not only have served themselves in the truest sense of the term, but they would also have served humanity at large. Thus viewed, Passive Resistance is the noblest and the best education. It should come, not after the ordinary education in letters, of children, but it should precede it. It will not be denied that a child, before it begins to write its alphabet and to gain wordly knowledge, should know what the soul is, what truth is, what love is, what powers are latent in the soul. It should be an essential of real education that a child should learn that, in the struggle of life, it can easily conquer hate by love, untruth by truth, violence by self-suffering. It was because I felt the forces of this truth, that, during the latter part of the struggle, I endeavored, as much as I could, to train the children at Tolstoy Farm and then at Phoenix along these lines, and one of the reasons for my departure to India is still further to realise, as I already do in part, my own imperfection as a Passive Resister, and then to try to perfect myself, for I believe that it is in India that the nearest approach to perfection is most possible.

## SPEECH AT THE JOHANNESBURG BANQUET.

*[A Banquet was given at Johannesburg to Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi on the eve of their departure for India, by a large number of Europeans and Indians]:—*

Mr. Gandhi said that, they or circumstances had placed him that evening in a most embarrassing position. Hitherto, those who had known him in Johannesburg had known him in the capacity of one of many hosts at a gathering of that kind, but that evening, they had placed him in the unfortunate position of being a guest, and he did not know how he would be able to discharge that duty. For, the other, he thought, long experience had fitted him, if he might say so, with due humility, most admirably; but the present position was entirely new to him and Mrs. Gandhi, and he was exceedingly diffident as to how he was going to discharge the new duty that had been imposed upon him. So much had been said about Mrs. Gandhi and himself their so-called devotion, their so-called self-sacrifice, and many other things. There was one injunction of his religion, and he thought it was true of all religions, and that was that, when one's praises were sung, one should fly from those praises, and, if one

could not do that, one should stop one's ears, and if one could not do either of these things, one should dedicate everything that was said in connection with one to the Almighty, the Divine essence, which pervaded everyone and everything in the Universe, and he hoped that Mrs. Gandhi and he would have the strength to dedicate all that had been said that evening to that Divine Essence.

Of all the precious gifts that had been given to them, those four boys were the most precious, and probably Mr. Chamney could tell them something of the law of adoption in India, and what Mr. and Mrs. Naidoo, both of them old gaol-birds, had done. They had gone through the ceremony of adoption, and they had surrendered their right to their four children and given them (Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi) the charge. He did not know that they were worthy to take charge of those children. He could only assure them that they would try to do their best. The four boys had been his pupils when he had been conducting a school for Passive Resisters at Tolstoy Farm and later on at Phoenix. Then when Mrs. Naidoo had sought imprisonment, the boys had been taken over to Johannesburg, and he thought that he had lost those four pearls; but the pearls had returned to him. He only hoped that Mrs. Gandhi and he would be able to take charge of the precious gift.

Johannesburg was not a new place to him. He saw many friendly faces there, many who had worked with him in many struggles in Johannesburg. He had gone through much, in life. A great deal of depression and

*Speech at the Johannesburg Banquet.*

sorrow had been his lot, but he had also learnt during all those years to love Johannesburg even though it was a Mining Camp. . It was in Johannesburg that he had found his most precious friends. It was in Johannesburg that the foundation for the great struggle of Passive Resistance was laid in the September of 1906. It was in Johannesburg that he had found a friend, a guide, and a biographer in the late Mr. Doke. It was in Johannesburg that he had found in Mrs. Doke a loving sister, who had nursed him back to life, when he had been assaulted by a countryman who had misunderstood his mission and who misunderstood what he had done. It was in Johannesburg that he had found a Kallenbach, a Polak, a Miss Schlesin, and many another who had always helped him, and always cheered him and his countrymen. Johannesburg, therefore had the holiest associations of all the holy associations that Mrs. Gandhi and he would carry back to India, and, as he had already said on many another platform, South Africa, next to India, would be the holiest land to him and to Mrs. Gandhi and to his children, for ; in spite of all the bitternesses, it had given them those life-long companions. It was in Johannesburg again that the European Committee had been formed, when Indians were going through the darkest stage in their history, presided over then, as it still was, by Mr. Hosken. It was last, but not least, Johannesburg that had given Valiamma, that young girl, whose picture rose before him even as he spoke, who had died

in the cause of truth. Simple-minded in faith—she had not the knowledge that he had, she did not know what Passive Resistance was, she did not know what it was the community would gain; but she was simply taken up with unbounded enthusiasm for her people—went to gaol, came out of it a wreck, and within a few days died. It was Johannesburg again that produced a Nagappan and Narayanasamy, two lovely youths hardly out of their teens, who also died. But both Mr. Gandhi and he stood living before them. He and Mr. Gandhi had worked in the limelight; those others had worked behind the scenes, not knowing where they were going, except this, that what they were doing was right and proper, and, if any praise was due anywhere at all, it was due to those three who died. They had had the name of Harbatsingh given to them. He (the speaker) had had the privilege of serving imprisonment with him. Harbatsingh was 75 years old. He was an ex-indentured Indian, and when he (the speaker) asked him why he had come there, he said that he had gone there to seek his grave; the brave man also replied, "What does it matter? I know what you are fighting for. You have not to pay the £3 tax; but my fellow ex-indentured Indians have to pay that tax; and, what more glorious death could I meet?" He had met that death in the gaol at Durban. No wonder if Passive Resistance had fired and quickened the conscience of South Africa! And therefore, whenever he had spoken, he had said that, if the Indian community had gained anything through this settlement, it was

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certainly due to Passive Resistance; but it was certainly not due to Passive Resistance alone. He thought that, the cablegram that had been read that evening, showed that, they had to thank that noble Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, for his great effort. He thought, too, that they had to thank the Imperial Government, who, during the past few years, in season and out of season, had been sending despatches after despatches to General Botha, and asking him to consider their standpoint—the Imperial standpoint. They had to thank also the Union Government for the spirit of justice they had adopted that time. They had, too, to thank the noble members of both Houses of the Legislature who had made those historic speeches and brought about the settlement; and, lastly, they had to thank the Opposition also for their co-operation with the Government in bringing about the passage of the Bill, in spite of the jarring note produced by the Natal Members. When one considered all those things, the service that he and Mrs. Gandhi might have rendered could be only very little. They were but two out of many instruments that had gone to make this settlement. And what was that settlement? In his humble opinion, the value of the settlement, if they were to examine it, would consist not in the intrinsic things they had received, but in the sufferings and the sorrows long drawn out that were necessary in order to achieve those things. If an outsider were to come there and find that there was a banquet given to two humble individuals for



the humble part they played in a settlement which freed indentured Indians from a tax which they should never have been called upon to pay, and if he were told also that some redress were given in connection with their marriages, and that their wives who were lawfully married to them according to their own religions had not hitherto been recognised as their wives, but by this settlement those wives were recognised as valid wives according to the law of South Africa, that outsider would laugh, and consider that those Indians, or those Europeans who had joined them in having a banquet, and giving all those praises and so on, must be a parcel of fools. What was there to gloat over in having an intolerable burden removed which might have been removed years ago? What was there in a lawful wife's being recognised in a place like South Africa? But, proceeded Mr. Gandhi, he concurred with Mr. Duncan in an article he wrote some years ago, when he truly analysed the struggle, and said that behind that struggle for concrete right, lay the great spirit which asked for an abstract principle and the fight which was undertaken in 1906, although it was a fight against a particular law, was a fight undertaken in order to combat the spirit that was seen about to overshadow the whole of South Africa and to undermine the glorious British Constitution, of which the Chairman had spoken so loftily that evening, and about which he (the speaker) shared his views. It was his knowledge, right or wrong, the British Constitution bound him to the Empire. Tear that Constitution to

*Speech at the Johannesburg Banquet.*

shreds and his loyalty also would be torn to shreds. Keep that Constitution intact, and they held him bound a slave to that Constitution. He had felt that the choice lay for himself and his fellow-countrymen between two courses, when this spirit was brooding over South Africa, either to sunder themselves from the British Constitution, or to fight in order that the ideals of that Constitution might be preserved—but only the ideals. Lord Ampthill had said, in a preface to Mr. Doke's book, that the theory of the British Constitution must be preserved at any cost if the British Empire was to be saved from the mistakes that all the previous Empires had made. Practise might bend to the temporary aberration through which local circumstances might compel them to pass; it might bend before unreasoning or unreasonable prejudice, but theory once recognised could never be departed from, and this principle must be maintained at any cost. And it was that spirit which had been acknowledged now by the Union Government, and acknowledged how nobly and loftily! The words that General Smuts so often emphasised still rang in his ears. He had said, "Gandhi, this time we want no misunderstanding, we want no mental or other reservations, let all the cards be on the table, and I want you to tell me wherever you think that a particular passage or word does not read in accordance with your own reading," and it was so. That was the spirit in which he approached the negotiations. When he remembered General Smuts of a few years ago, when he told Lord

Crewe that South Africa would not depart from its policy of racial distinction, that it was bound to retain that distinction, and that, therefore, the sting that lay in this Immigration Law would not be removed, many a friend, including Lord Ampthill, asked whether they could not for the time being suspend their activity. He had said "No." If they did that it would undermine his loyalty, and even though he might be the only person he would still fight on. Lord Ampthill had congratulated him, and that great nobleman had never deserted the cause even when it was at its lowest ebb, and they saw the result that day. They had not by any means to congratulate themselves on a victory gained. There was no question of a victory gained, but the question of the establishment of the principle that, so far as the Union of South Africa at least was concerned, its legislation would never contain the racial taint, would never contain the colour disability. The practice would certainly be different. There was the Immigration Law—it recognised no racial distinctions, but in practice they had arranged, they had given a promise, that there should be no undue influx from India as to immigration. That was a concession to present prejudice. Whether it was right or wrong was not for him to discuss then. But it was the establishment of that principle which had made the struggle so important in the British Empire, and the establishment of that principle which had made those sufferings perfectly justifiable and perfectly honourable, and he thought that,

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when they considered the struggle from that standpoint, it was a perfectly dignified thing for any gathering to congratulate itself upon such a vindication of the principles of the British Constitution. One word of caution he wished to utter regarding the settlement. The settlement was honourable to both parties. He did not think there was any room left for misunderstanding, but whilst it was final in the sense that it closed the great struggle, it was not final in the sense that it gave to Indians all that they were entitled to. There was still the Gold Law which had many a sting in it. There was still the Licensing Laws throughout the Union, which also contained many a sting. There was still a matter which the Colonial-born Indians, especially, could not understand or appreciate, namely, the water-tight compartments in which they had to live: whilst there was absolutely free inter-communication and inter-migration between the Provinces for Europeans, Indians had to be cooped up in their respective Provinces. Then there was undue restraint on their trading activity. There was the prohibition as to holding landed property in the Transvaal, which was degrading, and all these things took Indians into all kinds of undesirable channels. These restrictions would have to be removed. But, for that, he thought, sufficient patience would have to be exercised. Time was now at their disposal, and how wonderfully the tone had been changed! And here he had been told in Capetown, and he believed it implicitly, the spirit of Mr. Andrews had pervaded all those statesmen and leading men whom he

saw. He came and went away after a brief period ; but he certainly fired those whom he saw with a sense of their duty to the Empire of which they were members, But, in any case, to whatever circumstances that healthy tone was due, it had not escaped him. He had seen it amongst European friends whom he met at Capetown ; he had seen it more fully in Durban, and this time it had been his privilege to meet many Europeans who were perfect strangers even on board the train, who had come smilingly forward to congratulate him on what they had called a great victory. Everywhere he had noticed that healthy tone. He asked European friends to continue that activity, either through the European Committee or through other channels, and to give his fellow-country-men their help and extend that fellow-feeling to them also, so that they might be able to work out their own salvation.

To his countrymen he would say that they should wait and nurse the settlement, which he considered was all that they could possibly and reasonably have expected, and that they would now live to see, with the co-operation of their European friends, that what was promised was fulfilled, that the administration of the existing laws was just, and that vested rights were respected in the administration ; that after they had nursed these things, if they cultivated European public opinion, making it possible for the Government of the day to grant a restoration of the other rights of which they had been deprived, he did not think that there need be any fear about the

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future. He thought that, with mutual co-operation, with mutual goodwill, with due response, on the part of either party, the Indian community need never be a source of weakness to that Government or to any Government. On the contrary, he had full faith in his countrymen that, if they were well treated, they would always rise to the occasion and help the Government of the day. If they had insisted on their rights on many an occasion, he hoped that the European friends who were there would remember that they had also discharged the responsibilities which had faced them.

And now it was time for him to close his remarks and say a few words of farewell only. He did not know how he could express those words. The best years of his life had been passed in South Africa. India, as his distinguished countryman, Mr. Gokhale, had reminded him, had become a strange land to him. South Africa he knew, but not India. He did not know what impelled him to go to India, but he did know that the parting from them all, the parting from the European friends who had helped him through thick and thin, with a heavy blow, and one he was least able to bear; yet he knew he had to part from them. He could only say farewell and ask them to give him their blessing, to pray for them that their heads might not be turned by the praise they had received, that they might still know how to do their duty to the best of their ability, that they might still learn that first, second, and last should be the approbation of their own conscience and that then whatever might be due to them would follow in its own time.

## INDIANS AND THEIR EMPLOYERS

### SPEECH AT VERULAM

*[One of the most important gatherings, held just before Mr. Gandhi left South Africa, was the great meeting of indentured Indians and employers at Verulam. In his address, Mr. Gandhi took pains to make the position under the Relief Act absolutely clear to the Indian labourers, and addressed a few earnest words at the close to the European Employers of the neighbourhood] :—*

He asked his countrymen to understand that it was wrong for them to consider that the relief that had been obtained had been obtained because he had gone to gaol, or his wife, or those who were immediately near and dear to him. It was because *they* had had the good sense and courage to give up their own lives and to sacrifice themselves, and in these circumstances he had also to tell them that many causes led to that relief, and one of these was certainly also the most valuable and unstinted assistance rendered by Mr. Marshall Campbell of Mount Edgecombe. He thought that their thanks and his thanks were due to him for the magnificent work that he did in the Senate whilst the Bill was passing through it. They would now not have to pay the £3

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Tax, and the arrears would also be remitted. That did not mean that they were free from their present indentures. They were bound to go through their present indentures faithfully and honestly, but when those indentures terminated, they were just as free as any other free Indian, and they were entitled, if they would go to the Protector's office, to the same discharge certificate as was granted to those who came before 1895, under Law 25 of 1891. They were not bound to re-indenture nor to return to India. The discharge certificates would be issued to them free of charge. If they wanted, after having gone to India, to return, they could only do so after they had lived for full three years in the Province as free men after serving their indentures. If any of them wished to have assistance for going to India, they could obtain it from the Government if they did not wish to return from India. If, therefore, they wanted to return from India, they would fight shy of that assistance which was given to them by the Government, but would find their own money or borrow it from friends. If they re-indentured, they could come under the same law, namely, Law 25 of 1891. His own advice to them was not to re-indenture, but by all means to serve their present masters under the common law of the country. If ever occasion arose, which he hoped would never happen, they now knew what it was possible for them to do. But he wanted to remind them of this one thing, that Victoria County, as also the other Districts of Natal, had not been so free from violence on



their own part as the Newcastle District had been. He did not care that provocation had been offered to them or how much they had retaliated with their sticks or with stones, or had burned the sugar—cane—that was not Passive Resistance, and, if he had been in their midst, he would have repudiated them entirely and allowed his own head to be broken rather than permit them to use a single stick against their opponents. And he wanted them to believe him when he told them that Passive Resistance pure and simple, was an infinitely finer weapon than all the sticks and gunpowder put together. They might strike work, but they might compel nobody else to strike work, and, if, as a result of their strike, they were sentenced to be imprisoned, whipped, or to both, they must suffer even unto death—that was Passive Resistance, nothing else. Nothing else, and nothing less than that, would satisfy the requirements of Passive Resistance. If therefore, he was indentured to Mr. Marshall Champbell, or Mr. Sanders, or any friends about there, and if he found that he was being persecuted or not receiving justice, in their case he would not even go to the Protector, he would sit tight and say, "My master, I want justice or I won't work. Give me food if you want to, water if you want to; otherwise, I sit here hungry and thirsty," and he assured them that the hardest, stoniest heart would be melted. Therefore, let that sink deeply into themselves, that whenever they were afraid of any injury being done to them all, that was the sovereign remedy and that alone was the most effective remedy. If they wanted advice

and guidance, and many of them had complained that he was going away, and that his advice would not be at their disposal ; all he could suggest to them was that, although he was going away, Phoenix was not leaving, and, therefore if they had any difficulty for which they did not wish to pay Mr. Langston or other lawyers, they should go to Phoenix and ask Mr. West or Mr. Chhaganlal Gandhi what was to be done in a particular case. If Mr. West or Mr. Chhaganlal could help them, they would do so, free of charge, and if they could not, they would send them to Mr. Langston or his other brothers in the law, and he had no doubt that, if they went, to Mr. Langston with a certificate from Mr. West that they were too poor, he would render them assistance, free of charge. But, if they were called upon to sign any document, whatsoever, his advice to them was not to sign it unless they went to Phoenix and got advice. If Phoenix ever failed them and wanted a farthing from them, then they should shun Phoenix.

The scene before him, that morning, would not easily fade from his memory, even though the distance between him and them might be great. He prayed that God might help them in all the troubles that might be in store for them, and that their conduct might be such that God might find it possible to help them. And to the European friends, living in this country, he wished to tender his thanks, and he wished also to ask them to forgive him if they had ever considered that, during that awful time, he was instrumental in bringing about any retaliation at all

on the part of his countrymen. He wished to give them this assurance that he had no part or parcel in it, and that, so far as he knew, not a single leading Indian had asked the men to retaliate. There were times in a man's life when he lost his senses, his self-control, and, under a sense of irritation, fancied or real, began to retaliate when the brute nature in him rose, and he only went by the law of "might is right," or the law of retaliation—a tooth for a tooth. If his countrymen had done so, whether under a real sense of wrong or fancied, let them forgive him, and let them keep a kind corner in their hearts; and, if there were any employers of indentured labour present who would take that humble request to them, he did ask them not to think always selfishly, though he knew it was most difficult to eradicate self, and let them consider these indentured Indians not, merely, as cattle which they had to deal with, but as human beings with the same fine feelings, the same fine sentiments as themselves. Let them credit them to the fullest extent with their weaknesses, as also at least with the possibility of all the virtues. Would they not then treat their Indian employees even as brothers? It was not enough that they were well treated as they well treated their cattle. It was not enough that they looked upon them with a kindly eyes merely; but it was necessary that employers should have a much broader view of their own position, that they should think of their employees as fellow human beings and not as Asiatics who had nothing in common with them who

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were Europeans, and they would also respond to every attention that might be given to them. Then they would have an intelligent interest not merely in the material or physical well-being of their men, but in their moral well-being. Also they would look after their morality, after their children, after their education, after their sensation, and, if they were herding together in such a manner that they could not but indulge in hideous immorality, that they would themselves recoil with horror from the very imagination that the men who were for the time being under their control should indulge in these things, because, they had been placed in these surroundings. Let them not consider that because these men were drawn from the lowest strata of society that, they were beyond reclamation. No, they would respond to every moral pressure that might be brought to bear upon them, and they will certainly realise the mortal height that, it is possible for every human being, no matter who he is, no matter what tinge of colour his skin possesses.

## REPLY TO MADRAS PUBLIC RECEPTION.

*[The following is the speech delivered by Mr. M. K. Gandhi on the occasion of his visit to Madras in 1915. Sir S. Subramania Aiyar presided on the occasion] :—*

•MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,—On behalf of my wife and myself I am deeply grateful for the honour that you here, at Madras, and, may I say, this Presidency, have done to us and the affection that has been lavished upon us in this great and enlightened, not benighted, Presidency. If there is anything that we have deserved, as has been stated in this beautiful address, I can only say I lay it at the feet of my Master under whose inspiration I have been working all this time under exile in South Africa. In so far as the sentiments expressed in this address are merely prophetic, Sir, I accept them as a blessing and as a prayer from you, and from this great meeting, that both my wife and I myself may possess the power, the inclination, and the life to dedicate whatever may be developed in us by this sacred land of ours to the service of the Motherland. It is no wonder that we have come to Madras. As my friend, Mr. Natesan, will perhaps tell you, we have been long overdue and we

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seem to have neglected Madras. But we have done nothing of the kind. We knew that we had a corner in your hearts and we knew that you will not misjudge us if we did not hasten to Madras before going to other Presidencies and other towns. It was in 1896 that I found in Mr. Gokhale my Rajya Guru, and it was here that I found that deep abiding sense of religion which has carried me through all trials. I appeared in 1896, before you, as a stranger pleading a forlorn cause, and then discovered that Madras, this Presidency, had that instinctive power to distinguish between a right cause and a wrong cause which marks the religious, and it was here that you appreciated in its fullest measure the gravity of the situation that I was then endeavouring to place before my countrymen throughout India. (Hear, hear). And the impressions that I took with me to South Africa in 1896 have been more than amply verified throughout my experience in South Africa. The drafters of this beautiful address have, I venture to say, exaggerated, out of all proportion, the importance of the little work that I was able to do in South Africa. (Cries of No, No). As I have said on so many platforms, India is still suffering under the hypnotic influence produced upon it by that great saintly politician, Mr. Gokhale. He assured in my favour a certificate which you have taken at its surface value, and it is that certificate which has placed me in a most embarrassing position, embarrassing, because I do not know that I shall be able to answer the expectations that have been raised about myself and about my wife

in the work that lies before us in the future on behalf of this country.

But, Sir, if one-tenth of the language that has been used in this address is deserved by us, what language do you propose to use for those who have lost their lives, and, therefore, finished their work, on behalf of your suffering countrymen in South Africa? What language do you propose to use for Nagappan and Narayanaswami, lads of seventeen or eighteen years, who braved in simple faith all the trials, all the sufferings, and all the indignities for the sake of the honour of the Motherland? (Applause) What language do you propose to use with reference to Valliamma, that sweet girl of seventeen years, who was discharged from Maritzburg prison, skin and bone, suffering from fever to which she succumbed after about a month's time? (Cries of Shame) It was the Madrasis, who, of all Indians, were singled out by the great Divinity that rules over us for this great work. Do you know that in the great city of Johannesburg, the Madrasis look on a Madrasi dishonoured if he has not passed through the gaols once or twice during this terrible crisis that your countrymen in South Africa went through, during these eight long years? You have said that I inspired those great men and women, but I cannot accept that proposition. It was they, the simple-minded folk, who worked away in faith, never expecting slightest reward, who inspired me, who kept me on the proper level, and who combined me, by their great sacrifice, by their great faith, by their great trust in the

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great God, to do the work that I was able to do. It is my misfortune that I and my wife have been obliged to work in the lime-light, and you have magnified, out of proportion, this little work we have been able to do. Believe me, my dear friends, that if you consider, whether in India or in South Africa, it is possible for us, poor mortals, the same individuals, the same stuff of which you are made, if you consider that it is possible for us to do anything whatsoever with your assistance and without your doing the same thing that we would be prepared to do, you are lost, and we are also lost and our services will be in vain. I do not for one moment believe that the inspiration was given by us.

Inspiration was given by them to us and we were able to be interpreters between the powers who called themselves the Governors and those men for whom redress was so necessary. We were simply links between the two parties and nothing more. It was my duty, having received the education that was given to me by my parents, to interpret what was going on in our midst to those simple folk, and they rose to the occasion. They realised the importance of birth in India, they realised the might of religious force, and it was they who inspired us. Then let these who have finished their work, and who have died for you and me, let them inspire you and us. We are still living, and who knows that the devil will not possess us to-morrow and we shall not forsake the duty? But these three have gone for ever. An old man of 75 from the United



Provinces, Harbat Singh, he has also joined the majority and died in gaol in South Africa, and he deserved the crown that you would seek to impose upon us. These young men deserve all these adjectives that you have so affectionately, but blindly, lavished upon us. It was not only the Hindus who struggled, but there were Muhammadans, Parsis and Christians and almost every part of India was represented in the struggle. They realised the common danger, and they realised, also, what their destiny was as Indians, as it was they, and they alone, who matched the soul-force against physical forces.

## MADRAS LAW DINNER.

*[Speech delivered by Mr. M. K Gandhi on the occasion of "Madras Law Dinner" held at Madras on 24th April, 1915, under the presidency of the Advocate-General]:—*

MY LORD CHIEF JUSTICE, MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN:—During my three months' tour in India, as also in South Africa, I have been so often questioned how, I, a determined opponent of modern civilisation, and avowed patriot, could reconcile myself to loyalty to the British Empire, of which India was such a large part; how it was possible for me to find it consistent that India and England could work together for mutual benefit. It gives me the greatest pleasure, this evening, at this great and important gathering, to re-declare my loyalty to the British Empire, and my loyalty is based upon very selfish grounds. As a passive resister I discovered that he has to make good his claim to passive resistance, no matter under what circumstances he finds himself, and I find that the British Empire had certain ideals, with which I have fallen in love, and one of these ideals is that every subject of the British Empire has the freest scope possible for his energies and for whatever he thinks,

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is due to his conscience, I think that this is true of the British Empire, as it is not true of any other Government that we see. I feel, as you have, perhaps, known that I am no lover of any Government, and I have more than once said that the Government is best which governs the least; and I have found that it is possible for me to be governed least under the British Empire, hence my loyalty to the British throne.

## ADVICE TO STUDENTS.

[*Speech delivered at the Y.M.C.A. Madras, on 27th April, 1915, Hon'ble Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastry presiding*]:—

MR. CHAIRMAN AND DEAR FRIENDS:—MADRAS has well-nigh exhausted the English vocabulary in using adjectives of virtue with reference to my wife and myself and if I may be called upon to give an opinion as to where I have been smothered with kindness, love and attention, I would have to say it is Madras. (Applause). But as I have said so often, I belived it of Madras. So it is no wonder to me that you are lavishing all these kindnesses with unparalleled generosity, and now the worthy President of the Servants of India Society, under which Society I am now going through a period of probation, has, if I may say so, capped it all. Am I worthy of these things? My answer from the innermost recess of the heart is an emphatic "No." But I have come to India to become worthy of every adjective that you may use, and all my life certainly be dedicated to prove worthy of them if I am to be a worthy servant. In India's beautiful national song, (Bande Matařam), the poet has lavished all the adjectives that he possibly could to describe Mother India. Have we a right to sing that hymn? The poet, no doubt, gave us a picture for our realisation, the words for which remain simply prophetic, and it is for you, the hope of India, to realise every word

that the poet has said in describing this Motherland of ours. To-day I feel that these adjectives are very largely misplaced in his description of the Motherland.

You, the students of Madras as well as the students all over India, are you receiving an education which will make you worthy to realise that ideal, and which will draw the best out of you? Or is it an education which has become a factory for making Government employees, or clerks in commercial offices? Is the goal of the education that you are receiving for mere employment whether in Government department or in other departments? If that be the goal of your education, if that is the goal that you have set before yourselves, I feel, I fear, that the vision that the poet pictured for himself is far from being realised. As you have heard me say, perhaps or as you have read, I am, and I have been, a determined opponent of modern civilisation. I want you to turn your eyes to-day upon what is going on in Europe, and if you have come to the conclusion that Europe is to-day groaning under the heels of that modern civilisation, then, you and your elders will have to think twice before you emulate that civilisation in our Motherland. But I have been told: "How can we help it seeing that our Rulers bring that culture to our Motherland?" Do not make any mistake about it. I do not, for one moment, believe that it is for our Rulers to bring that culture to you, unless you are prepared to accept it and if it be that the Rulers bring that culture before us, I think that we have forces for ourselves to enable us to reject that culture without

### *Advice to Students.*

having to reject the Rulers themselves. (Applause.) I have said on many a platform that the British race is with us. I decline to go into the reasons why that race is with us, but I do not believe that it is possible for India, if it would live up to the traditions of the Sages of whom you have heard from our worthy President, to transmit a message through this great race, a message not of physical might but a message of love. And then it will be your privilege to conquer the conquerors, not by shedding blood, but by sheer spiritual predominance. When I consider what is going on in India, I think it is necessary for us to see what our opinion is in connection with the political assassinations and political dacoities. I feel that these are purely a foreign importation, which cannot take root in this land. But you, the student world, have to beware lest, mentally, or morally, you give one thought of approval to this kind of terrorism, I, as a passive resister, will give you another thing very substantial for it. Terrorise yourself; search within; by all means resist tyranny where ever you find it; by all means resist encroachment upon your liberty; but not by shedding the blood of the tyrant. That is not what is taught by our religion. Our religion is based upon *Ahimsa* which in its active form is nothing but love: love, not only to your neighbours, not only to your friends, but love even to those who may be your enemies.

One word more in connection with the same thing. I think that if we were to practise truth, to practise *Ahimsa*, we must immediately see that we also practise

fearlessness. If our Rulers are doing what in our opinion is wrong, and if we feel it our duty to let them hear our advice, even though it may be considered sedition, I urge you to speak sedition—but at your peril, you must be prepared to suffer the consequences. And when you are ready to suffer the consequences and not hit below the belt, then I think you will have made good your right to have your advice heard even by the Government.

I ally myself to the British Government, because I believe that it is possible for me to claim equal partnership with every subject of the British Empire. I, to-day, claim that equal partnership. I do not belong to a subject race. I do not call myself a subject race. (Applause.) But there is this thing: it is not for the British Governors to give you, it is for you to take the thing. That, I want, only by discharging my obligations. Max Muller has told us—we need not go to Max Muller to interpret our own religion—but he says our religion consists in four letters D-U-T-Y and not in the five letters R-I-G-H-T. And if you believe that all that we want can go from a *letter*, discharge of our duty then think always of your duty, and fighting along these lines you will have no fear of any man; you will only fear God. That is the message that my Master too, Mr. Gokhale, has given to us: what is that message then? It is in the constitution of the Servants of India Society, and that it is that message by which I wish to be guided in my life. The message is to spiritualise political life and political institutions of the country. We must immediately set

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about realising it in practice. Then students cannot be away from politics. Politics is as essential to them as religion. Politics cannot be divorced from religion.

My views may not be acceptable to you I know. All the same, I can only give you what is stirring me to my very depths. On the authority of my experience in South Africa, I claim that your countrymen who had not that modern culture, but who had that strength of the Rishis of old who have inherited the Tapasyacharya performed by the Rishis, without having known a single word of English literature, and without having known anything whatsoever of the present modern culture, were able to rise to their full height. And what has been possible for the uneducated and illiterate countrymen of ours in South Africa, is ten times possible for you and for me, to-day, in this sacred land of ours. May that be your privilege and may that be mine also! (Loud Applause).



## BRAHMINS AND PANCHAMAS.

*[Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi on their way to Trunquebar arrived at Mayavaram on 2nd May, 1915, and they were presented with an address by the citizens of the town. In the course of his reply Mr. Gandhi said] :—*

It was quite by accident that I had the great pleasure, of receiving an address from my 'Panchama brethren, and there, they said that they were without convenience for drinking water, they were without convenience for living supplies, and they could not buy or hold land. It was difficult for them even to approach courts. Probably, the last is due to their fear, but a fear certainly not due to themselves ; and who is then responsible for this state of things ? Do we propose to perpetuate this state of things ? Is it a part of Hinduism ? I do not know. I have now to learn what Hinduism really is. In so far as I have been able to study Hinduism outside India, I have felt that it is no part of real Hinduism to have in its fold a mass of people whom I would call "untouchables." If it was proved to me that this is an essential part of Hinduism, I, for one, would declare myself an open rebel against Hinduism itself. (Hear, hear.)

## *Brahmins and Panchamas.*

Are the Brahmins in Mayavaram equiminded towards the Pariah and will they tell me, if they are so equiminded and if so, will they tell me if others will not follow? Even if they say that they are prepared to do so but others will not follow, I shall have to disbelieve them until I have revised my notions of Hinduism. If the Brahmins themselves consider they are holding high position by penance and posterity, then they have themselves much to learn, then they will be the people who have cursed and ruined the land.

### MR. GANDHI AND THE LEADERS

My friend, the Chairman, has asked me the question whether it is true that I am at war with my leaders. I say that I am not at war with my leaders. I seemed to be at war with my leaders because many things I have heard seem to be inconsistent with my notions of self-respect and with self-respect to my Motherland. I feel that they are probably not discharging the sacred trust they have taken upon their shoulders; but I am not sure I am studying or endeavouring to take wisdom from them, but I failed to take that wisdom. It may be that I am incompetent and unfit to follow them. So, I shall revise my ideas. Still I am in a position to say that I seem to be at war with my leaders. Whatever they do or whatever they say does not somehow or other appeal to me. The major part of what they say does not seem to be appealing to me.

### ENGLISH AND THE VERNACULARS

I find here words of welcome in the English language.

age. I find in the Congress programme a Resolution on Swadeshi. If you hold that you are Swadeshi and yet print these in English, then I am not a Swadeshi. To me it seems that it is inconsistent. I have nothing to say against the English language. But I do say that, if you kill the vernaculars and raise the English language on the tomb of the vernaculars (hear, hear), then you are not favouring Swadeshi in the right sense of the term. If you feel that I do not know Tamil, you should pardon me, you should excuse me and teach me and ask me to learn Tamil and by having your welcome in that beautiful language, if you translate it to me, then I should think you are performing some part of the programme. Then only I should think I am being taught Swadeshi.

### SWADESHI ENTERPRISE

I asked when we were passing through Mayavaram whether there have been any handlooms here and whether there were handloom weavers here. I was told that there were 50 handlooms in Mayavaram. What were they engaged in? They were simply engaged chiefly in preparing "Sarees" for our women. Then is Swadeshi to be confined only to the women? Is it to be only in their keeping? I do not find that our friends, the male population also have their stuff prepared for them in these by these weavers and through their handlooms, (a voice there are a thousand handlooms here). There are, I understand, one thousand handlooms so much the worse for the leaders! (Loud applause.) If these one

thousand handlooms are kept chiefly in attending to the wants of our women, double this supply of your handlooms and you will have all your wants supplied by your own weavers and there will be no poverty in the land. I ask you and ask our friend the President how far he is indebted to foreign goods for his outfit and if he can tell me that he has tried his utmost and still has failed to outfit himself or rather to fit himself out with Swadeshi clothing and therefore he has got this stuff, I shall sit at his feet and learn a lesson. What I have been able to learn to-day is that it is entirely possible for me, not with any extra cost to fit myself with Swadeshi clothing. How am I to learn through those who move or who are supposed to be movers in the Congress, the secret of the Resolution. I sit at the feet of my leaders. I sit at the feet of Mayavaram people and let them reveal the mystery, give me the secret of the meaning, teach me how I should behave myself and tell me whether it is a part of the National movement that I should drive off those who are without dwellings, who cry for water and that I should reject the advances of those who cry for food. These are the questions which I ask my friends here. Since I am saying something against you, I doubt whether I shall still enjoy or retain the affection of the student population and whether I shall still retain the blessings of my leaders. I ask you to have a large heart and give me a little corner in it. I shall try to steal into that corner. If you would, be kind enough to teach me the wisdom, I shall learn the

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wisdom in all humility and in all earnestness. I am praying for it, and I am asking for it. If you cannot teach me, I again declare myself at war with my leaders. (Loud cheers).

## REPLY TO NELLORE CONFERENCE

*[Replying to a complimentary Resolution moved at the Madras Provincial Conference at Nellore, Mr. Gandhi said]:—*

It was an accident that this Resolution followed on two Resolutions, one with reference to his revered master and the other with reference to the noble Viceroy to whom a fitting tribute had been paid by the President. He was there free to acknowledge the indebtedness of his countrymen in South Africa to the noble Viceroy. If his wife and he were worthy of anything that had been said on this platform and on many a platform, he had repeated, and he was there again to repeat, that they owed all to the inspiration they derived from Indian sources, for it was Mr. Gokhale, his love, and his message, that had been his guiding star, and would still remain his guiding star. He would appeal to them not to spoil him and his wife by taking away from the services they had to render by overpraising them. He would make this simple, but humble, appeal. Let what he and his wife had done in South Africa be buried there. Their countrymen in South Africa would know what had been done. It was impossible for any one, much less for them, to

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trade on any reputation made in South Africa. He feared that by overpraising them, they might raise enormous expectations about him and his wife that they might in the end, he would not say it was hardly likely, meet with disappointment.

## REPLY TO BANGALORE PUBLIC

*[An address was presented to Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi by the Citizens of Bangalore, on 8th May, 1915, to which Mr. Gandhi replied as follows] :—*

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MY FRIENDS,—I think it is simply impertinent to tell you that I thank you most sincerely on behalf of my wife and on my own behalf for the signal honour you have shown me. Words fail me, and one thought oppresses me all the more. Am I, are we, worthy of the honour? Are we worthy of the oriental generosity of this love? The Chairman has furnished this ground for the love, and quoted Mr. Gokhale. Let me not bask in that reputation. See me please in the nakedness of my working, and in my limitations, you will then know me. I have to tread on most delicate grounds, and my path is destined to be through jungles and temples. The glamour produced by the saintly politician has vanished, and let us be judged eye to eye. So many have assembled here to do honour. This morning, you did greater honour. Greater honour was shown by the Reception Committee in arranging for the conversation, in order to open my heart to you and to understand the inner-most thoughts in you by quiet conversation between my countrymen and myself.

I did not want to be dragged. There is a meaning. Let us not be dragged. Let them work silently. We should not encourage the thought that workers will be



honoured similarly. Let public men feel that they will be stoned, that they will be neglected, and let them feel they still love the country. A charge has been brought against us that we are too demonstrative and lack business-like methods. We plead guilty to the charge. Are we to copy modern activities, or are we to copy the ancient civilisation, which has survived so many shocks? You and I have to act on the political platform from the spiritual side, and if this is done, we shall then conquer the conquerors. The day will dawn then, when we can consider an Englishman as a fellow-citizen (Cheers), That day will shortly come, but it may be difficult to conceive. I have had signal opportunities of associating myself with Englishmen of character, devotion, nobility and influence. I can assure you that the present wave of activity is passing away, and a new civilisation is coming shortly, which will be a nobler one.

India is a great dependency and Mysore is a great Native State. It must be possible for you to transmit this message to British Governors and to British statesmen; the message is: establish a *Rama Rajya* in Mysore and have your minister a Vashista, who will command obedience. My fellow countrymen, then you can dictate terms to the conquerors. (Prolonged Cheers).

## MR. GANDHI ON MR. GOKHALE

[*In unveiling the portrait of Mr. Gokhale in Bangalore, Mr. Gandhi spoke as follows*]:—

MY DEAR COUNTRYMEN,—Before I perform this ceremony to which you have called me, I wish to say this to you that you have given me a great opportunity or rather a privilege on this great occasion. I saw in the recitation—the beautiful recitation that was given to me,—that God is with them whose garment was dusty and tattered. My thoughts immediately went to the end of my garment; I examined and found that it is not dusty and it is not tattered; it is fairly spotless and clean. God is not in me. There are other conditions attached; but in these conditions too I may fail; and you, my dear countrymen, may also fail; and if we do tend this well, we should not dishonour the memory of one whose portrait you have asked me to unveil this morning. I have declared myself his disciple in the political field and I have him as my *Rajya Guru*: and this I claim on behalf of the Indian people. It was in 1896 that I made this declaration, and I do not regret having made the choice.

Mr. Gokhale taught me that the dream of every Indian who claims to love his country, should be to act in the political field, should be not to glorify in language, but to spiritualise the political life of the country, and the political institutions of the country. He inspired my life and is still inspiring: and in that I wish to purify

myself and spiritualise myself. I have dedicated myself to that ideal. I may fail and to what extent I may fail, I call myself to that extent an unworthy disciple of my master.

### • SPIRITUALISING THE POLITICAL LIFE

What is the meaning of spiritualising the political life of the country? What is the meaning of spiritualising myself? That question had come before me often and often and to you it may seem one thing, to me it may seem another thing; it may mean different things to the different members of the Servants of India Society itself. It shows much difficulty and it shows the difficulties of all those who want to love their country, who want to serve their country and who want to honour their country. I think the political life must be an echo of private life and that there cannot be any divorce between the two.

I was by the side of that saintly politician to the end of his life and I found no ego in him. I ask you members of the Social Service League, if there is no ego in you. If he wanted to shine, he wanted to shine in the political field of his country, he did so not in order that he might gain public applause, but in order that his country may gain. He developed every particular faculty in him, not in order to win the praise of the world for himself but in order that his country may gain. He did not seek public applause, but they were showered upon him, they were thrust upon him; he wanted that his country may gain and that was his great inspiration.

*Mr. Gandhi on Mr. Gokhale.*

There are many things for which India is blamed, very rightly, and if you should add one more to our failures the blame will descend not only on you but also on me for having participated in to-day's functions. But I have great faith in my countrymen.

You ask me to unveil this portrait to-day, and I will do so in all sincerity and sincerity should be the end of your life. (Loud and continued applause.)

## INDIA'S POVERTY

*[Questioned as to India's poverty, Mr. Gandhi said India was becoming poorer and poorer, on account of the disappearance of the handloom industries owing to violent competition and export of raw materials] :—*

"We have lost" he said, "much of our self-respect, on account of being too much Europeanised. We think and speak in English. Thereby, we impoverish our vernaculars, and estrange the feelings of the masses. A knowledge of English is not very essential to the service of our Motherland." Turning to caste, he said "caste is the great power and secret of Hinduism."

Asked where he would stay, Mr. Gandhi replied: "Great pressure is brought down on me to settle in Bengal; but I have a great capital in the store of my knowledge in Guzerat and I get letters from there."

"Vernacular literature is important. I want to have a library of all books. I invite friends for financial aid to form libraries and locate them."

"Modern civilization is a curse in Europe as also in India. War is the direct result of modern civilization, everyone of the Powers was making preparations for war."

## *India's Poverty.*

"Passive Resistance is a great moral force, meant for the weak, also for the strong. 'Soul-force depends on itself. Ideals must work in practice, otherwise they are not potential. Modern civilisation is a brute force.'"

It is one thing to know the ideal and another thing to practise it. That will ensure greater discipline, which means a greater service and greater service means greater gain to Government. Passive resistance is a highly aggressive thing. The attribute of soul is restlessness there is room for every phase of thought.

"Money, land and women are the sources of evil and evil has to be counteracted. I need not possess land, nor a woman. nor money to satisfy my luxuries. I do not want to be unhinged because others are unhinged. If ideals are practised, there will be less room for mischievous activities. Public life has to be moulded."

"Every current has to change its course. There are one and a half million sadhus and if every sadhu did his duty, India could achieve much. Jagat Guru Sankaracharya does not deserve that appellation because he has no more force in him."

Malicious material activity is no good. It finds out means to multiply one's luxuries. Intense gross modern activity should not be imposed on Indian institutions which have to be remodelled on ideals taken from Hinduism. Virtue as understood in India is not understood in foreign lands. Dasaratha is considered a fool in foreign lands, for his having kept his promise to his wife.

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India says a promise is a promise. That is a good ideal. Material activity is mischievous. "Truth shall conquer in the end."

• "Emigration does no good to the country from which people emigrate. Emigrants do not return better moral men. The whole thing is against Hinduism. Temples do not flourish. There are no opportunities for ceremonial functions. Priests do not come, and at times, they are merely men of straw. Immigrants play much mischief and corrupt society. It is not enterprise. They may earn more money easily in those parts which means, they do not want to toil and remain straight in the methods of earning. Immigrants are not happier and have more material wants.

Questioned about the Theosophical Society Mr. Gandhi said; "There is a good deal of good in the Theosophical Society, irrespective of individuals. It has stimulated ideas and thoughts."

## BENARES INCIDENT

*[There appeared in the 'New India' a charge against Mr. Gandhi as having spoken something to be taken an exception to by the public while addressing a large audience at the "Hindu University Pavilion," Benares to which Mr. Gandhi replied as under] :—* •

Mrs. Besant's reference in *New India* and certain other references to the Benares incident perhaps render it necessary for me to return to the subject, however disinclined I may be to do so. Mrs. Besant denies my statement with reference to her whispering to the Princes. I can only say that if I can trust my eyes and my ears I must adhere to the statement I have made. She occupied a seat on the left of the semi-circle on either side of the Maharaja of Dharbanga, who occupied the Chair, and there was at least one Prince, perhaps there were two who were sitting on her side. Whilst I was speaking Mrs. Besant was almost behind me. When the Maharajas rose Mrs. Besant also had risen. I had ceased speaking before the Rajas actually left the platform. She was discussing the incident with a group round her on the platform, I gently suggested to her that she might have refrained from interrupting, but that



if she disapproved of the speech after it was finished she could have then dissociated herself from my sentiments. But she, with some degree of warmth, said: "How could we sit still when you were compromising every one of us on the platform? You ought not to have made the remarks you did." This answer of Mrs. Besant's does not quite tally with her solicitude for me which alone, according to her version of the incident, prompted her to interrupt the speech. I suggest that if she merely meant to protect me she could have passed a note round or whispered into my ears her advice. And, again, if it was for my protection why was it necessary for her to rise with Princes and to leave the hall as I hold she did along with them?

So far as my remarks are concerned I am yet unable to know what it was in my speech that seems to her to be open to such exception as to warrant her interruption. After referring to the Viceregal visit and the necessary precautions that were taken for the Viceroy's safety I showed that an assassin's death was anything but honourable death and said that anarchism was opposed to our Shastras and had no room in India. I said then where there was an honourable death it would go down to history as men who died for their conviction. But when a bomb thrower died, secretly plotting all sorts of things, what could he gain? I then went on to state and deal the fallacy that, had not bomb throwers, thrown bombs we should never have gained what we did with reference to the Partition movement. It was

at about this stage that Mrs. Besant appealed to the chair to stop me. Personally, I will desire a publication of the whole of my speech whose trend was a sufficient warrant for showing that I could not possibly incite the students to deeds of violence. Indeed it was conceived in order to carry on a rigorous self-examination.

I began by saying that it was a humiliation for the audience and myself that I should have to speak in English. I said that English having been the medium of instruction it had done a tremendous injury to the country, and as I conceive I showed successfully that, had we received training during the past 50 years in higher thought in our own vernaculars, we would be to-day within reach of our goal. I then referred to the self-government Resolution passed at the Congress and showed that whilst the All-India Congress Committee and the All-India Muslim League would be drawing up their paper about the future constitution their duty was to fit themselves by their own action for self-government. And in order to show how short we feel of our duty, I drew attention to the dirty condition of the labyrinth of lanes surrounding the great temple of Kasi Visvanath and the recently erected palatial buildings without any conception as to the straightness or width of the streets. I then took the audience to the gorgeous scene that was enacted on the day of the foundation and suggested that if a stranger not knowing anything about Indian life had visited the scene he would have gone away under the false

impression that India was one of the richest countries in the world,—such was the display of jewellery worn by our noblemen. And turning to the Maharajas and the Rajahs I humourously suggested that it was necessary for them to hold those treasures in trust for the nation before we could realise our ideals, and I cited the action of the Japanese noblemen who considered it a glorious privilege even though there was no necessity for them, to depose themselves of the treasures and lands which were handed to them from generation to generation. I then asked the audience to consider the humiliating spectacle of the Viceroy's person having to be protected from ourselves when he was our honoured guest. And I was endeavouring to show that the blame for these precautions was also on ourselves in that they were rendered necessary because of the introduction of organised assassination in India. Thus I was endeavouring to show on the one hand how the students could usefully occupy themselves in assisting to rid the society of its proved defects, on the other, to wean themselves even in thought from methods of violence.

I claim that with twenty years' experience of public life in the course of which I had to address on scores of occasions turbulent audiences, I have some experience of feeling the pulse of my audience. I was following closely how the speech was being taken and I certainly did not notice that the student world was being adversely affected. Indeed some of them came to me the following

### *Benares Incident.*

morning and told me that they perfectly understood my remarks which had gone home. One of them a keen debater even subjected to cross-examination and seemed to feel convinced by a further development of the argument such as I had advanced in the course of my speech. Indeed I have spoken now to thousands of students and others of my countrymen throughout South Africa, England and India; and by precisely the arguments that I used that evening I claimed to have weaned many from their approval of anarchical methods.

Finally, I observe that Mr. S. S. Setlur of Bombay, who has written on the incident to the *Hindu* in no friendly mood towards me, and who I think in some respects totally unfairly has endeavoured to tear me to pieces, and who was an eye witness to the proceedings, gives a version different from Mrs. Besant's. He thinks that the general impression was not that I was encouraging the anarchists but that I was playing the role of an apologist for the Civilian bureaucrat. The whole of Mr. Setlur's attack upon me shows that if he is right I was certainly not guilty of any incitement to violence and that the offence consisted in my reference to jewellery, etc.

In order that the fullest justice might be done both to Mrs. Besant and myself I would make the following suggestion. She says that she does not propose to defend herself by quoting the sentence which drove the Princes away and that would be playing into the enemy's hands; according to her previous statement my speech is already

in the hands of the detectives so that so far as my safety is concerned her forbearance is not going to be of the slightest use. Would it not therefore be better that she should either publish a verbatim report if she has it or reproduce such sentiments in my speech as in her opinion, necessitated her interruption and the Princes' withdrawal.

I will therefore conclude this statement by repeating what I have said before ; that but for Mrs. Besant's interruption I would have concluded my speech within a few minutes and no possible misconception about my views on anarchism would have arisen.

## INDENTURED LABOUR

The question of indentured labour is a seasonable subject for more reasons than one. Messrs. Andrews and Pearson have just returned from Fiji after finishing their self-imposed labours for the sake of India which they have learnt to love as they love their motherland. Their report is about to be issued. There Mr. Malaviya has given notice for leave to move a resolution in the Imperial Council which will if adopted, commit the Government to a repeal of the system of indentured labour. Mr. Malaviya's resolution will be, it may be decided, a continuation of the late Mr. Gokhale's work in 1912, when in a speech full of fervour and weighted with facts and figures he moved his resolution demanding repeal of this form of labour. The deceased statesman's resolution was thrown out only by the force of official majority. The moral victory lay with Mr. Gokhale. The deathknell of the system was rung when that resolution was moved. The Government, as it could not then abolish the system, outvoted Mr. Gokhale but did not fail to note that they must hurry forward to do so at an early date. Mr. Malaviya's proposed resolution and the report of Messrs. Andrews and Pearson, which

latter, it is known, is, to suggest total abolition of the system, will enable Lord Hardinge fittingly to close his most eventful viceroyalty removing this longstanding and acknowledged grievance.

These lines will be merely an attempt to give personal observations and to indulge in a few reflections upon the question. For facts and figures the reader and the public worker must look up Mr. Gokhale's speech referred to above and Messrs. Andrews and Pearson's forthcoming report.

Indentured labour is admittedly a movement of slavery. The late Sir William Wilson Hunter, when his attention was drawn to it in 1895, was the first to call it a state perilously near to slavery. Most legislation only partly reflects the public opinion of its time. Legislation abolishing slavery was really a bit in advance of public opinion, and that was a big bit. And its effect, like that of all such legislation was largely neutralised by the dissatisfied slave-owners resorting to the dodge of indentured labour. The yoke, if it fell from the Negro's black neck, was transferred to the brown neck of the Indian. In the process of transfer, it had to be somewhat polished, it had to be lightened in weight and even disguised. Nevertheless in all its essentials it retained its original quality. The hideousness of the system was forcefully demonstrated when the curse descended upon South Africa in the shape of indentured labourers from China for working the gold mines. It was no mere election cry that the late Sir Henry

### *Indentured Labour.*

Campbell Bannerman had taken up when he made the British Isles from end to end ring with denunciation of the system. No cost was counted as too great for ridding South Africa of the evil. The great multi-millionaires of Johannesburg spared nothing to be enabled to hold to the indentured Chinaman. They asked for breathing-time. The House of Commons remained unmoved. Mine-owners had to shift for themselves. The interest of humanity overrode all other considerations. The mines were threatened to be closed. The House did not care. The millions promised to Mr. Chamberlain would not be forthcoming. The House laughed. Within six months of passage of the measure for the abolition of Chinese indentured labour, every Chinese labourer had been repatriated bag and baggage. The mines survived the shock. They discovered other methods of life. And now be it said to the credit of the mine-owners as well as of the Conservatives who opposed the measure, that both these classes recognise that the abolition was a great deliverance.

Indian indentured labour is not less demoralising. It has persisted because its bitterness like that of a sugared pill has been cleverly though unconsciously concealed. The one great distinction between the two classes was that the Chinese were brought in without a single woman with them, whereas every hundred Indian labourers must include forty women among them. Had the Chinese remained they would have sapped the very foundations of the society. The Indian labourers



confine the evil to themselves. This may be unimportant to non-Indians. But for us, the wonder is that we have allowed the sin to continue so long. The business about the women is the weakest and the irremediable part of the evil. It therefore needs a somewhat closer inspection. These women are not necessarily wives. Men and women are huddled together during the voyage. The marriage is a farce. A mere declaration by men and women made upon landing before the Protector of immigrants that they are husband and wife constitutes a valid marriage. Naturally enough divorce is common. The rest must be left to the imagination of the reader. This is certain—that the system does not add to the moral well-being of India. And it is suggested that no amount of figures adduced to show that the labourer is far richer at the end of his contract of labour than when he entered upon it can be allowed to be any set-off against the moral degradation it involves.

There is another most powerful consideration to be urged against the continuance of this system. The relations between Englishmen and Indians in India are not of the happiest. The average Englishman considers himself to be superior to the average Indian and the latter is generally content to be so considered. Such a state of things is demoralising to both and a menace to the stability of the British Empire. There is no reason why every Englishman should not learn to consider every Indian as his brother and why should not every Indian cease to think that he

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is born to fear every Englishman. Be that as it may, this unnatural relationship is reflected in an exaggerated form outside India when the artificial state of indentured service under a white employer is set up. Unless, therefore, the relation between the English and ourselves is put on a correct footing in India, and transference of Indian labourers to far off lands whether parts of the Empire or otherwise, even under a free contract must harm both employer and employed. I happen to have the privilege of knowing most humane employers of Indian labourers in Natal. They were their men. But they do not, they cannot give them more than the most favoured treatment that their cattle receive. I use this language in no uncharitable spirit. The humanest of employers cannot escape the limitations of his class. He instinctively feels that the Indian labourer is inferior to him and can never be equal to him. Surely no indentured Indian, no matter how clever and faithful he may be, has ever inherited his master's state. But I know English servants who have risen to their master's state even as Indian servants have risen to their Indian master's state. It is not the Englishman's fault that the relationship with his Indian employees has not been progressive. It is beyond the scope of these lines to distribute the blame, if there is any, on either side or to examine the causes for the existence of such a state of things. I have been obliged to advert to it to show that apart from all other considerations, the system of indentured labour is demonstrably so degrading to us as a nation that it must be stopped at any cost and that now.

## THE NEED OF INDIA

*[Mr. M. K. Gandhi delivered an address to the students at the Y. M. C. A. auditorium, Madras (1916) with the Hon. Rev. G. Pittendrigh in the chair, in the course of which he said]:—*

I did not know what subject to choose. A friend has handed me a slip here, asking me whether I would not enlighten the students on the Benares incident. I fear that I shall have to disappoint that friend and those of you who associate yourselves with that view. I do not think you need lay any stress upon that incident. Those are the passing waves which will always come and go. I would rather this morning, if I can possibly do so, pour my soul out to you with reference to something which I treasure so much above everything else. To many students who came to me last year, I said I was about to establish an Ashrama somewhere in India, and it is about that place that I am going to talk to you to-day.

## THE NEED OF INDIA

I have felt during the whole of my public life that what we need, what any Nation needs, but we perhaps of all the other Nations of the world need just now, is

## *The Need of India.*

nothing else and nothing less than character-building. You know that Mr. Gokhale used so often to say that our average was less than the average of so many European Nations. I do not know whether that statement of him, whom with pride I consider to be my political Guru, has really any foundation in fact. But I do believe that there is much to be said to justify that statement in so far as the educated India is concerned, not because the educated portion of the community blundered, but because we have been creatures of circumstances. Be that as it may; this is the maxim of life which I have accepted, namely, that no work done by any man, no matter how great he is, will really prosper unless it has a religious backing. By religion, I do not mean the religion which you will get after reading all the scriptures of the world; it is not really a grasp by the brain but it is the heart-grasp. It is a thing which is not evident to us, but it is a thing which is evolved out of us; it is always within us, with some, consciously so; with the other quite unconsciously, but it is there, and whether we wake up this religious instinct in us through outside assistance or by inward growth, no matter how it is done, it has got to be done if we want to do anything in the right manner and anything that is going to persist. Our scriptures have laid down certain rules as maxims of life, which we have to take for granted, and believing in these maxims implicitly for all these long years and having actually endeavoured to reduce to practice those injunctions of the Shastras,

## *Mahatma Gandhi.*

I have deemed it necessary to seek the association of those who think with me in founding this Institution. I shall place before you this morning the rules that have been drawn up and that have to be observed by everyone who seeks to be a member of that Ashrama.

### VOW OF TRUTH.

There are five rules known as Yamas, and the first is the vow of truth, not truth as we ordinarily understand it, but truth which means that we have to rule our life by the law of truth at any cost, and in order to satisfy the definition I have drawn upon the celebrated illustration of the life of Prahlada, who, for the sake of truth, dared to oppose his own father. In this Ashrama we make it a rule that we must say no when we mean no, regardless of consequences.

### VOW OF AHIMSA.

The next rule is the vow of Ahimsa, which means non-killing. To me, it has a world of meaning, and takes me into realms much higher than the realms to which I would go if I merely understood Ahimsa to mean non-killing. Ahimsa really means that you may not offend anybody, you may not harbour an uncharitable thought even in connection with one who may consider himself to be your enemy. For one who follows the doctrine of Ahimsa, there is no room for the enemy. Under this rule, there is no room for organised assassination, and there is no room for murders even openly committed, and there is no room for violence even for the sake of your country and even for guarding the

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honour of precious ones that may be under your charge. This doctrine of Ahimsa tells us, that we may guard the honour of those who are under our charge by delivering ourselves into the hands of the men who would commit the sacrilege, and that requires far greater physical and mental courage than delivering blows. You may have some degree of physical power—I do not say courage—and you may use that power, but after it is expended, what happens? The man is wild with wrath and indignation, and you have made him wilder by matching your violence against his, and when he has done you to death, the rest of his violence is delivered on to your charge; but if you do not retaliate but simply stand on your ground to receive all blows and stand between your charge and the opponent, what happens? I give you my promise that the whole violence will be expended on you, and your charge will be left sacred.

### VOW OF CELIBACY

Those who want to perform National Service or those who want to have the glimpse of real religious life must lead a celibate life, whether married or unmarried. Marriage brings a woman close together with a man, and then become friends in a special sense, never to be parted either in this life or in the lives that are to come; but I do not think that into that plane of life our lusts should necessarily enter.

### CONTROL OF PALATES

Then there is the vow of the Control of the palates. A man who wants to control his animal passion easily

does so without even noticing that he does so. Without being a slave to his palate, he will master his palate. This is one of the most difficult vows to follow. I am just now coming from having inspected the Victoria Hostel, and I saw to my dismay that there are so many kitchens, not kitchens that are established in order to serve caste restrictions, but kitchens that have become necessary in order that we can have condiments and the exact weight of condiments, to which we were used in the respective countries or the places or provinces from which we have come. For the Brahmanas themselves there are different compartments and different kitchens catering after the delicate tastes of those different groups. I suggest to you that this is simply slavery to the palate rather than mastery of the palate. Unless we are satisfied with foods that are necessary for the proper maintenance of our physical health, and unless we are prepared to rid ourselves of those stimulating and heating and exciting condiments that we mix with our food, we will certainly not be able to control the overabundant unnecessary exciting energy that we may have. Eating and drinking and indulging in passion, we share in common with the animals, but have you seen a horse, a cow indulging in palate to the excess that we do? Do you suppose that it is a sign of civilisation, a sign of actual life that we should multiply our eatables so far that we do not know where we are?

#### VOW OF NON-THIEVING

The next rule is the 'vow of non-thieving. We are

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thieves in a way if we take anything that we do not need for immediate use, and keep it from some body else who needs it. It is a fundamental law of Nature, that Nature produces enough for our wants from day to-day, and if only every body took only enough for him and no more, there will be no poverty in the world, and there will be no man dying of starvation in this world. And so long as we have got this inequality, so long I shall have to say we are thieves. I am no socialist, and I do not want to dispossess those who have got possessions, but I do say that personally those of us who want to see darkness out of light have to follow this doctrine. In India, we have three millions of people having to be satisfied with only one meal consisting of a chapati containing no fat in it and a pinch of salt.

### VOW OF SWADESHI

The vow of Swadeshi is a necessary vow. I suggest to you that we are departing from one of the sacred laws of our being when we leave our neighbour and go somewhere else to satisfy our wants. If a man comes from Bombay here and offers you wares, you are not justified in supporting the Bombay merchant or trader so long as you have got a merchant at your very door born and bred in Madras. That is my view of Swadeshi. In your village, so long as you have a village barber, you are bound to support the village barber to the exclusion of the finished barber that may come to you from Madras. Train your village barber by all means to reach the attainment of the barber from Madras, but



until he does so, you are not justified in going to the Madras barber. When we find that there are many things we cannot get, we try to do without them. We may have to do without so many things which to-day we consider necessary, and believe me when you have that frame of mind, you will find a great burden taken off your shoulders even as the pilgrim did in that inimitable book *Pilgrim's Progress*.

### VOW OF FEARLESSNESS.

I found through my wanderings in India that all educated India is seized with a paralysing fear. We may not open our lips in public. We may not declare our confirmed opinions in public. We may hold those opinions, and we may talk about them secretly, and we may do anything within the four walls of a house, but those opinions are not for public consumption. If we took a vow of silence, I would have nothing to say, but when we open our lips in public we say things which we really do not believe. I do not know whether this is not the experience of almost every one who speaks in public. I then suggest to you that there is only one Being, if Being is the proper term to be applied, whom we have to fear, and that is God. If you want to follow the vow of truth in any shape or form, fearlessness is the necessary consequence.

### UNTOUCHABLES

We have also a vow in connection with the untouchables. There is an ineffaceable blot which Hinduism carries with it to-day. I have declined to believe

## *The Need of India.*

that it has been handed to us from immemorial times. I think that these miserable, wretched, enslaving spirits of untouchables must have come to us when we were in a cycle of our lives at our lowest ebb, and that evil has stuck to us and it remains with us. It is to my mind a curse that has come to us, and so long as it remains with us, we are bound to consider that every affliction that we labour under in this sacred land is a fit and proper punishment for the great crime that we are committing. That any person should be considered untouchable because of his calling passes one's comprehension, and you, the student world, who receive all this modern education, if you become a party to this crime, it were better that you receive no education whatsoever. We are labouring under a heavy handicap. You, although you may realise that there cannot be a single human being on this earth who should be considered to be untouchable, you cannot react upon your families and upon your surroundings, because all your thought is conceived in a foreign tongue. So we have introduced a rule in the Ashrama that we shall receive our education through the Vernaculars. In order to solve the problem of languages in India, we in the Ashrama make it a point of learning as many Indian Vernaculars as we possibly can, and I assure you that the trouble of learning these languages is nothing compared to the trouble that we have to take in mastering the English language. Even after all that trouble, it is not possible for us to express ourselves in the English language as

clearly as in our own mother tongue. Education has enabled us to see the horrible crime in connection with the so-called untouchables, but we are seized with fear, and we have got our superstitious veneration for our family traditions and for the members of our families.

### POLITICS

Last of all, when you have conformed to these rules, I think then, and not till then, you may come to politics and dabble in them to your heart's content. Politics divorced from religions, have absolutely no meaning, and if the student world crowd the political platforms of the country, to my mind, it is not necessarily a healthy sign of national growth; but that does not mean that we in student-life ought not to learn politics. Politics are also a part of our being. We want to understand our national institutions, we ought to understand our national growth. So, in the Ashrama, every child is taught to understand political institutions, and know how the country is vibrating with new emotions, with new aspirations, with new life; but we want also the infallible light of religious faith, not faith which merely appeals to the intelligence, but faith which is indelibly inscribed in the heart. To-day what happens is that immediately young men cease to be students they sink into oblivion, and they seek miserable employments, carrying miserable emoluments, knowing nothing of God, knowing nothing of fresh air and fresh light, and knowing nothing of that real vigorous independence that comes out of obedience to those laws that I have placed before you.

CONCLUSION

I am not here asking you to crowd into the Ashrama—there is no room there. But I say that every one of you may enact that Ashrama life individually and collectively. I shall be satisfied with anything that you may choose from the rules I have ventured to place before you and act up to it. But if you think that these are the outpourings of a mad man, you will not hesitate to tell me that it is so, and I shall take that judgment from you undismayed. (Loud cheers.)

## SOCIAL SERVICE

*[The anniversary meeting of the Social Service League, Madras. (1916) was held at the quadrangle of the Christian College, the Anderson Hall having been found insufficient to accommodate the immensely large gathering which had begun to assemble from an early hour. Mrs. Whitehead presided. Bishop Whitehead was also present. Mr. Gandhi having been called upon by Mrs. Whitehead to address the meeting said] :—*

For social service as for any other service on the face of this earth, there is one condition indispensable, *viz.*, proper qualifications on the part of those who want to render social service or any other service, and so we shall ask ourselves this evening whether those of us who are already engaged in this kind of service and those who aspire to render that service possess those necessary qualifications, because you will agree with me that servants if they can mend matters, they can also spoil matters, and in trying to do service, however well-intentioned that service might be, if they are not qualified for that service, they will be rendering not service but disservice.

## THE SOCIAL SERVANT

What are those qualifications? I imagine I could almost repeat to you the qualifications that I described this morning to the students in the Y. M. C. A. Hall, because they are of universal application, and they are necessary for any class of work, and much more so in social service at this time of the day in our national life, in our dear country. It seems to me that we do require truth in the one hand and fearlessness in the other hand. Unless we carry the torchlight of truth we shall not see the state in front, and unless we carry the quality of fearlessness we shall not be able to give the message that we might want to give on proper occasions, when the occasion for testing us comes, and such occasions do not occur so often as they might imagine they come but rarely. They are special privileges, and unless we have this fearlessness, I feel sure that when that supreme final test comes we shall be found wanting; and then I ask, and I ask you to ask yourselves, whether those of you, who are engaged in this service and those of you, who want hereafter to engage in this service, have these two qualities. But let me remind you also that these two qualities may be trained in us in a manner detrimental to ourselves and in a manner detrimental to those with whom we may come in contact. That is a dangerous statement almost to make, but when I make that statement I would like you to consider that truth comes not as truth but only as truth so called. You will recall the instance of Ravana and Rama. You will

recall the instance of Lakshmana on the one hand and Indrajit on the other in that inimitable book *Ramayana*. Both Lakshmana and Indrajit performed austerities, both of them had attained to a certain kind of self-control, and yet we find that what Indrajit possessed was as mere dross and that what Lakshmana possessed was great assistance and he has left a treasure for us to cherish and to value. What was that additional quality that Lakshmana possessed? I venture to suggest to you that Lakshmana was divinely guided, that he had religious perception and that his life was guided upon principle and based upon religion, while, that of Indrajit was based upon irreligion. Life without religion, I hold, is life without principle, and life without principle, is like a ship without a rudder: and just as a ship without a rudder will be tossed about from place to place, and never reach its destination, so will a man without this religious backing, without that hard grasp of religion be also tossed about on this stormy ocean of the world, without ever reaching his destined goal. And so I suggest to every social servant that he may not run away with the idea that he will serve his fellow-countrymen unless he got those two qualities duly sanctified by religious perception, by a life so far divinely guided.

#### VILLAGE SANITATION

Our Chair Lady was good enough to take me to a village that is just behind the compound of the Bishop's house. It is a Pariah village. She described to me the condition that little village was in, before this League

commenced its operations there, and I am an eyewitness to what that village is to-day, and I make myself bold to state that that village is a model of cleanliness and order, and it is certainly much cleaner than some of the busiest and the most central parts of Madras. That is an undoubtedly creditable piece of work on the part of the Social Service League, and if the League can penetrate into the recesses of Madras and do the same kind of work, the things which I have noticed in Madras will be conspicuous by their absence when I next pay my visit to this great city. It is not enough that we clean out the villages occupied by our Pariah brethren. If they are amenable to reason, to persuasion, shall we have to say that the so-called highest classes are not equally amenable to reason, to persuasion and are not amenable to the hygienic laws which are indispensable in order to live a city life? We may do many things with impunity when we have got vast acres of open ground to surround us, but when we transport ourselves to crowded streets where we have hardly air space enough to give our lungs the proper quantity of air, the life becomes changed and we have to obey another set of laws.

It is no use saddling the Municipality with responsibility for the conditions in which we find, not only the central parts of Madras, but the conditions in which we find the central parts of every city in India without exception—and I have gone now to almost every city of importance in India. I feel that no Municipality in the world will be able to override the habits that a class of



people may have in them, and have been banded down to them from generation to generation. It is work that can be done only by patient toil and guidance, with those two immutable weapons in our hands. It can be done only by such bodies as a Social Service League. If we are pulsating with the new life, with the new vision which shall open before us in the near future, I think there are signs which will be an indication to show that we are pulsating with a new life which is going to be a proper life for us, which will add dignity to our Nationality and which will carry the banner of progress forward. I therefore suggest to you that the question of sanitary reform in this big city is practically a hopeless task if we expect our Municipality to do it unaided by this voluntary work. For be it from me to absolve the Municipality from their responsibility. I think that there is still a great deal left to be done by the Municipality.

#### BENARES

Mr. Gandhi then proceeded to deal with the great need for the work of a Social Service League in such a sacred city as Benares, where there was a mass of dirt and confusion and want of orderliness so much detrimental to the preservation of the holiness and sanctity of the place. What was true of the Kashi temple was true of a majority of their Hindu temples. Such problems could not be solved so successfully by the Government or Municipality as by voluntary bodies like the Social Service League. Those who took up League work ought to be nurtured in new traditions. They were filled with

horror at many evils they witnessed, and that was a position that stared Social Service Leagues in the face throughout the length and breadth of India.

### SCHOOL AND FAMILY LIFE

Much of the neglect of such work, Mr. Gandhi pointed out, was due to the condition of the country at present, when the school life was not an extension of family life, and if that were so, students would respond and analyse the difficulties that faced them and they would still be going to temples while they were at the same time visiting temples. Before students could take up such work in this country, the educational system would have to be revolutionalised. They were to-day in a hopelessly false position, and they would incur the curse of the next generation for the great tragedy they saw being enacted before them to-day. It was a matter for thinking and it was a matter for redressing, no matter how difficult of attainment the result might be to-day. The task was herculean, but if the task was herculean the reward that they would receive from the blessings of generations to come would be an adequate reward.

The lecturer then dealt with the need for work on the part of Social Service League in order to ameliorate the condition of third class passengers in railway carriages, so as to minimise overcrowding, discomfort and fatigue and what not.

In conclusion the lecturer said that if those who undertook social service would carry courage with them wherever they went, their efforts would be crowned with success.

## SWADESHI

[*A Paper read before the Missionary Conference, Madras, 1916*].

It was not without much diffidence that I undertook to speak to you at all. And I was hard put to in the selection of my subject. I have chosen a very delicate and difficult subject. It is delicate because of the peculiar views I hold upon Swadeshi, and it is difficult because I have not that command of language which is necessary for giving adequate expression to my thoughts. I know that I may rely upon your indulgence for the many shortcomings you will no doubt find in my address, the more so when I tell you that there is nothing in what I am about to say that I am not either already practising or am not preparing to practise to the best of my ability. It encourages me to observe that last month you devoted a week to prayer in the place of an address. I have earnestly prayed that what I am about to say may bear fruit, and I know that you will bless my word with a similar prayer.

After much thinking I have arrived at a definition of Swadeshi that perhaps best illustrates my meaning. Swadeshi is that spirit in us which restricts us to the use

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and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote. Thus, as for religion, in order to satisfy the requirements of the definition, I must restrict myself to my ancestral religion. That is the use of my immediate religious surrounding. If I find it defective I should serve it by purging it of its defects. In the domain of politics I should make use of the indigenous institutions and serve them by curing them of their proved defects. In that of economics I should use only things that are produced by my immediate neighbours and serve those industries by making them efficient and complete where they might be found wanting. It is suggested that such Swadeshi, if reduced to practice, will lead to the millennium. And as we do not abandon our pursuit after the millennium because we do not expect quite to reach it within our times, so may we not abandon Swadeshi even though it may not be fully attained for generations to come.

Let us briefly examine the three branches of Swadeshi as sketched above. Hinduism has become a conservative religion and therefore a mighty force because of the Swadeshi spirit underlying it. It is the most tolerant because it is non-proselytising, and it is as capable of expansion to-day as it has been found to be in the past. It has succeeded not in driving, as I think it has been erroneously held, but in absorbing Buddhism. By reason of the Swadeshi spirit a Hindu refuses to change his religion not necessarily because he considers it to be the best, but because he knows that he can

complement it by introducing reforms. And what I have said about Hinduism is, I suppose, true of the other great faiths of the world, only it is held that it is specially so in the case of Hinduism. But here comes the point I am labouring to reach. If there is any substance in what I have said, will not the great missionary bodies of India, to whom she owes a deep debt of gratitude for what they have done and are doing, do still better and serve the spirit of Christianity better by dropping the goal of proselytising but continuing their philanthropic work? I hope you will not consider this to be an impertinence on my part. I make the suggestion in all sincerity and with due humility. Moreover, I have some claim upon your attention. I have endeavoured to study the Bible. I consider it as part of my scriptures. The spirit of the Sermon on the Mount competes almost on equal terms with the Bhagavad-Gita for the domination of my heart. I yield to no Christian in the strength of devotion with which I sing "Lead kindly light" and several other inspired hymns of a similar nature. I have come under the influence of noted Christian missionaries belonging to different denominations. And I enjoy to this day the privilege of friendship with some of them. You will, perhaps, therefore allow that I have offered the above suggestion not as a biased Hindu but as a humble and impartial student of religion with great leanings towards Christianity. May it not be that "Go Ye Unto All The World" message has been somewhat narrowly interpreted and the spirit of it missed? It will not be denied,

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I speak from experience, that many of the conversions are only so-called. In some cases the appeal has gone not to the heart but to the stomach. And in every case a conversion leaves a sore behind it which, I venture to think, is avoidable. Quoting again from experience, a new birth, a change of heart, is perfectly possible in every one of the great faiths. I know I am now treading upon thin ice. But I do not apologise, in closing this part of my subject, for saying that the frightful outrage that is just going on in Europe, perhaps, shows that the message of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Peace, had been little understood in Europe, and that light upon it may have to be thrown from the East.

I have sought your help in religious matters, which it is yours to give in a special sense. But I make bold to seek it even in political matters. I do not believe that religion has nothing to do with politics. The latter, divorced from religion, is like a corpse only fit to be buried. As a matter of fact in your own silent manner you influence politics not a little. And I feel that if the attempt to separate politics from religion had not been made as it is even now made, they would not have degenerated as they often appear to do. No one considers that the political life of the country is in a happy state. Following out the Swadeshi spirit I observe the indigenous institutions and the village panchayats hold me. India is really a republican country and it is because it is that that it has survived every shock hitherto delivered. Princes and Potentates, whether they were Indian born

or foreigners, have hardly touched the vast masses except for collecting revenue. The latter in their turn seem to have rendered unto Cæsar's what was Cæsar's and for the rest have done much as they have liked. The vast organisation of caste answered not only the religious wants of the community, but it answered too its political needs. The villagers managed their internal affairs through the caste system, and through it they dealt with any oppression from the ruling power or powers. It is not possible to deny of a nation that was capable of producing the caste system its wonderful power of organisation. One had but to attend the great Kumbha Mela at Hardwar last year to know how skilful that organisation must have been, which, without any seeming effort was able effectively to cater for more than a million pilgrims. Yet it is the fashion to say that we lack organising ability. This is true, I fear, to a certain extent, of those who have been nurtured in the new traditions. We have laboured under a terrible handicap owing to an almost fatal departure from the Swadeshi spirit. We, the educated classes, have received our education through a foreign tongue. We have therefore, not reacted upon the masses. We want to represent the masses, but we fail. They recognise us not much more than they recognise the English officers. Their hearts are an open book to neither. Their aspirations are not ours. Hence there is a break. And you witness not in reality failure to organise but want of correspondence between the representatives and the represented. If,

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during the last fifty years, we had been educated through the vernaculars, our elders and our servants and our neighbours would have partaken of our knowledge ; the discoveries of a Bose or a Ray would have been household treasures as are the Ramayan and the Mahabharat. As it is, so far as the masses are concerned, those great discoveries might as well have been made by foreigners. Had instruction in all the branches of learning been given through the Vernaculars, I make bold to say that they would have been enriched wonderfully. The question of village sanitation, etc., would have been solved long ago. The village Panchayats would be now a living force in a special way, and India would almost be enjoying Self-Government suited to its requirements and would have been spared the humiliating spectacle of organised assassination on its sacred soil. It is not too late to mend. And you can help if you will, as no other body or bodies can.

And now for the last division of Swadeshi. Much of the deep poverty of the masses is due to the ruinous departure from Swadeshi in the economic and industrial life. If not an article of commerce had been brought from outside India, she would be to-day a land flowing with milk and honey. But that was not to be. We were greedy and so was England. The connection between England and India was based clear upon an error: But she does not remain in India in error. It is her declared policy that India is to be held in trust for her people. If this be true, Lancashire must stand aside. And, if



Swadeshi doctrine is a sound doctrine Lancashire can stand aside without hurt, though it may sustain a shock for the time being. I think of Swadeshi not as a boycott movement undertaken by way of revenge. I conceive it as a religious principle to be followed by all. I am no economist, but I have read some treatises which show that England could easily become a self-sustained country, growing all the produce she needs. This may be an utterly ridiculous proposition, and perhaps the best proof that it cannot be true is that England is one of the largest importers in the world. But India cannot live for Lancashire or any other country before she is able to live for herself. And she can live for herself only if she produces and is helped to produce every thing for her requirements within her own borders. She need not be, she ought not to be, drawn into the vortex of mad and ruinous competition which breeds fratricide, jealousy and many other evils. But who is to stop her great millionaires from entering into the world competition? Certainly not legislation. Force of public opinion, proper education, however, can do a great deal in the desired direction. The hand-loom industry is in a dying condition. I took special care during my wanderings last year to see as many weavers as possible, and my heart ached to find how they had lost, how families had retired from this one flourishing and honourable occupation. If we follow the Swadeshi doctrine, it would be your duty and mine to find out neighbours who can supply our wants and to teach them to supply them where they do not know how

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to, assuming that there are neighbours who are in want of healthy occupation. Then every village of India will almost be a self-supporting and self-contained unit, exchanging only such necessary commodities with other villages where they are not locally producible. This may all sound nonsensical. Well, India is a country of nonsense. It is nonsensical to parch one's throat with thirst when a kindly Muhammadan is ready to offer pure water to drink. And yet thousands of Hindus would rather die of thirst than drink water from a Muhammadan household. These nonsensical men can also, once they are convinced that their religion demands that they should wear garments manufactured in India only and eat food only grown in India, decline to wear any other clothing or eat any other food. Lord Curzon set the fashion for tea-drinking. And that pernicious drug now bids fair to over-whelm the nation. It has already undermined the digestive apparatus of hundreds of thousands of men and women and constitutes an additional tax upon their slender purses. Lord Hardinge can set the fashion for Swadeshi and almost the whole of India will forswear foreign goods. There is a verse in the Bhagavat Gita which, freely rendered, means masses follow the classes. It is easy to undo the evil if the thinking portion of the community were to take the Swadeshi vow, even though it may for a time cause considerable inconvenience. I hate legislative interference in any department of life. At best it is the lesser evil. But I would tolerate, welcome, indeed plead for a stiff protective duty upon foreign

goods. Natal, a British colony, protected its sugar by taxing the sugar that came from another British colony, Mauritius. England has sinned against India by forcing free trade upon her. It may have been food for her, but it has been poison for this country.

It has often been urged that India cannot adopt Swadeshi in the economic life at any rate. Those who advance this objection do not look upon Swadeshi as a rule of life. With them it is a mere patriotic effort not to be made if it involved any self-denial. Swadeshi as defined here, is a religious discipline to be undergone in utter disregard of the physical discomfort it may cause to individuals. Under its spell the deprivation of a pin or a needle, because these are not manufactured in India, need cause no terror. A Swadeshist will learn to do without hundreds of things which to-day he considers necessary. Moreover, those who dismiss the Swadeshi from their minds by arguing the impossible forget that Swadeshi, after all, is a goal to be reached by steady effort. And we would be making for the goal even if we confined Swadeshi to a given set of articles allowing ourselves as a temporary measure to use such things as might not be procurable in the country.

There now remains for me to consider one more objection that has been raised against Swadeshi. The objectors consider it to be a most selfish doctrine without any warrant in the civilised code of morality. With them to practise Swadeshi is to revert to barbarism. I cannot enter into a detailed analysis of the proposition.

But I would urge that Swadeshi is the only doctrine consistent with the law of humility and love. It is arrogance to think of launching out to serve the whole of India when I am hardly able to serve even my own family. It were better to concentrate my effort upon the family and consider that through them I was serving the whole nation and if you will the whole of humanity. This is humility and it is love. The motive will determine the quality of the act. I may serve my family regardless of the sufferings I may cause to others, as for instance, I may accept an employment which enables me to extort money from people, I enrich myself thereby and then satisfy many unlawful demands of the family. Here I am neither serving the family nor the State. Or I may recognise that God has given me hands and feet only to work with for my sustenance and for that of those who may be dependent upon me. I would then at once simplify my life and that of those whom I can directly reach. In this instance I would have served the family without causing injury to anyone else. Supposing that every one followed this mode of life, we would have at once an ideal state. All will not reach that state at the same time. But those of us who, realising its truth, enforce it in practice will clearly anticipate and accelerate the coming of that happy day. Under this plan of life, in seeming to serve India to the exclusion of every other country, I do not harm any other country. My patriotism is both exclusive and inclusive. It is exclusive in the sense that in all humility I confine my

attention to the land of my birth, but it is inclusive in the sense that my service is not of a competitive or antagonistic nature. *Sic utere tuo ut alienum non laedas* is not merely a legal maxim, but it is a grand doctrine of life. It is the key to a proper practice of *Ahimsa* or love. It is for you, the custodians of a great faith, to set the fashion and show by your preaching, sanctified by practice, that patriotism based on "hatred killeth" and that patriotism based on "love giveth life."

## ECONOMIC *vs.* MORAL PROGRESS

[Mr. M. K. Gandhi delivered an instructive lecture on “Does economic progress clash with real progress?” at a meeting of the Muir Central College Economic Society held in the Physical Science Theatre. The Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya presided] :—

When I accepted Mr. Kapildev Malaviya's invitation to speak to you upon the subject of this evening, I was painfully conscious of my limitations. You are an economic society. You have chosen distinguished specialists for the subjects included in your syllabus for this year and the next. I seem to be the only speaker ill-fitted for the task set before him. Frankly and truly, I know very little of economics, as you naturally understand them. Only the other day, sitting at an evening meal, a civilian friend deluged me with a series of questions on my crankisms. As he proceeded in his cross-examination, I being a willing victim, he found no difficulty in discovering my gross ignorance of the matters I appeared to him to be handling with a cock-suredness worthy only of a man who knows not that he knows not. To his horror and even indignation, I suppose, he found that I had not even read books on

economics by such well-known authorities as Mill, Marshall, Adam Smith and a host of such other authors. In despair, he ended by advising me to read these works before experimenting in matters economic at the expense of the public. He little knew that I was a sinner past redemption. My experiments continue at the expense of trusting friends. For there come to us moments in life when about somethings we need no proof from without. A little voice within us tells, "you are on the right track, move neither to your left nor right, but keep to the straight and narrow way." With such help we march forward slowly indeed, but surely and steadily. That is my position. It may be satisfactory enough for me, but it can in no way answer the requirements of a society such as yours. Still it was no use my struggling against Mr. Kapildeva Malaviya. I knew that he was intent upon having me to engage your attention for one of your evenings. Perhaps you will treat my intrusion as a welcome diversion from the trodden path. An occasional fast after a series of sumptuous feasts is often a necessity. And as with the body so, I imagine, is the case with the reason. And if your reason this evening is found fasting instead of feasting, I am sure it will enjoy with the greater avidity the feast that Rao Bahabur Pandit Chaddrika Prasad has in store for you for the 12th of January.

Before I take you to the field of my experiences and experiments it is perhaps best to have a mutual understanding about the title of this evening's address.

### *Economic vs. Moral Progress.*

Does economic progress clash with real progress? By economic progress, I take it, we mean material advancement without limit and by real progress we mean moral progress, which again is the same thing as the progress of the permanent element in us. The subject may therefore be stated thus: Does not moral progress increase in the same proportion as material progress? I know that this is a wider proposition than the one before us. But I venture to think that we always mean the larger one even when we lay down the smaller. For we know enough of science to realise that there is no such thing as perfect rest or repose in this visible universe of ours. If therefore material progress does not clash with moral progress it must necessarily advance the latter. Nor can we be satisfied with the clumsy way in which sometimes those who cannot defend the larger proposition put their case. They seem to be absessed with the concrete case of thirty millions of India stated by the late Sir William Wilson Hunter to be living on one meal a day. They say that before we can think or talk of their moral welfare we must satisfy their daily wants. With these, they say, material progress spells moral progress. And then is taken a sudden jump: what is true of thirty millions is true of the universe. They forget that hard cases make bad law. I need hardly say to you how ludicrously absurd this deduction would be. No one has ever suggested that grinding pauperism can lead to anything else than moral degradation. Every human being has a right to live, and therefore to find the



where withal to feed himself and where necessary, to clothe and house himself. But for this very simple performance we need no assistance from economists or their laws.

“Take no thought for the morrow” is an injunction which finds an echo in almost all the religious scriptures of the world. In well ordered society the securing of one’s livelihood should be and is found to be the easiest thing in the world. Indeed the test of orderliness in a country is not the number of millionaires it owns, but the absence of starvation among its masses. The only statement that has to be examined is whether it can be laid down as a law of universal application that material advancement means moral progress.

Now let us take a few illustrations. Rome suffered a moral fall when it attained high material affluence. So did Egypt, and so perhaps most countries of which we have any historical record. The descendants and kinsmen to the royal and divine Krishna too fell when they were rolling in riches. We do not deny to the Rockfellers and the Carnegies the possession of an ordinary measure of morality but we gladly judge them indulgently. I mean that we do not even expect them to satisfy the highest standard of morality. With them material gain has not necessarily meant moral gain. In South Africa where I had the privilege of associating with thousands of our countrymen on most intimate terms, I observed almost invariably that the greater the possession of riches the greater was their moral turpitude.

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Our rich men, to say the least, did not advance the moral struggle of passive resistance as did 'the poor.' The rich men's sense of self-respect was not so much injured as that of the poorest. If I were not afraid of treading on dangerous ground, I would even come nearer home, and show you that possession of riches has been a hindrance to real growth. I venture to think that the scriptures of the world are far safer and sounder treatises on laws of economics than many of the modern text-books. The question we are asking ourselves this evening is not a new one. It was addressed to Jesus two thousand years ago. St. Mark has vividly described the scene. Jesus is in his solemn mood; he is earnest. He talks of eternity. He knows the world about him. He is himself the greatest economist of his time. He succeeded in economising time and space—he transcended them. It is to him at his best that one comes running, kneels down, and asks: "Good master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said unto him: "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments. Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal. Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother." And he answered and said unto him: 'Master, all these have I observed from my youth.' Then Jesus beholding him loved him and said unto him: 'One thing thou lackest, Go thy way, sell whatever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven—come take up the cross and follow me.' And he was sad at

that saying and went away grieved—for he had great possessions.' And Jesus looked round about and said unto his disciples: 'How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God.' And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again and saith unto them 'Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God!' Here you have an eternal rule of life stated in the noblest words the English language is capable of producing. But the disciples nodded unbelief as we do even to this day. To him they said as we say to-day: But look how the law fails in practice. If we sell all and have nothing we shall have nothing to eat. We must have money or we cannot even be reasonably moral. So they state their cause thus! "And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves: 'Who then can be saved.' And Jesus looking upon them saith: 'With men it is impossible but not with God, for with God all things are possible'. Then Peter began to say unto him: 'Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.' And Jesus answered and said: 'Verily I say unto you there is no man that has left house or brethren or sisters, or father or mother, or wife or children or lands for my sake and the Gospel's but he shall receive one hundredfold now in this time house and brethren and sisters and mothers and children and lands with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first

shall be last and the last first." You have here the result or reward, if you prefer the term, of following the law. I have not taken the trouble of copying similar passages from the other non-Hindu scriptures and I will not insult you by quoting in support of the law stated by Jesus passages from the writings and sayings of our own sages, passages even stronger if possible than the Biblical extracts. I have drawn your attention to, perhaps the strongest of all the testimonies in favour of the affirmative answer to the question before us are the lives of the greatest teachers of the world. Jesus, Mahomed, Buddha, Nanak, Kabir, Chaitanya, Sankara, Dayanand Ramakrishna were men who exercised an immense influence over and moulded the character of thousands of men. The world is the richer for their having lived in it. And they were all men who deliberately embraced poverty as their lot.

I should not have laboured my point as I have done, if I did not believe that, in so far as we have made the modern materialistic craze our goal, in so far are we going down hill in the path of progress. I hold that economic progress in the sense I have put it is antagonistic to real progress. Hence the ancient ideal has been the limitation of activities promoting wealth. This does not put an end to all material ambition. We should still have as we have always had in our midst people who make the pursuit of wealth their aim in life. But we have always recognised that it is a fall from the ideals. It is a beautiful thing to know that the wealthiest among us

have often felt that to have remained voluntarily poor would have been a higher state for them. That you cannot serve God and Mammon is an economic truth of the highest value. We have to make our choice. Western Nations are to day groaning under the heel of the monster god of materialism. Their moral growth has become stunted. They measure their progress in £. s. d. American wealth has become the standard. She is the envy of the other Nations. I have heard many of our countrymen say that we will gain American wealth but avoid its method. I venture to suggest that such an attempt if it were made is foredoomed to failure. We cannot be "wise, temperate and furious" in a moment. I would have our leaders to teach us to be morally supreme in the world. This land of ours was once, we are told, the abode of the Gods. It is not possible to conceive Gods inhabiting a land which is made hideous by the smoke and the din of mill chimneys and factories and whose road ways are traversed by rushing engines dragging numerous cars crowded with men mostly who know not what they are after, who are often absent minded, and whose tempers do not improve by taking uncomfortably packed like sardines in boxes and finding themselves in the midst of utter strangers who would oust them if they could and, whom they would in their turn oust similarly. I refer to these things because they are held to be symbolical of material progress. But they add not an atom to our happiness. This is what Wallace, the great scientist, has said as his deliberate judgment.

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"In the earliest records which have come down to us from the past, we find ample indications that general ethical considerations and conceptions, the accepted standard of morality, and the conduct resulting from these, were in no degree inferior to those which prevail to-day." In a series of chapters he then proceeds to examine the position of the English Nation under the advance in wealth it has made. He says; "This rapid growth of wealth and increase of our power over nature put too great a strain upon our crude civilization, on our superficial Christianity, and it was accompanied by various forms of social immorality almost as amazing and unprecedented." He then shows how factories have risen on the corpses of men, women and children, how as the country has rapidly advanced in riches it has gone down in morality. He shows this by dealing with insanitation, life destroying trades, adulteration, bribery and gambling. He shows how with the advance of wealth justice has become immoral, deaths from alcoholism and suicide have increased, the average of premature births and congenital defects have increased and prostitution has become an institution. He concludes his examination by these pregnant remarks:

"The proceedings of the divorce courts show other aspects of the result of wealth and leisure; while a friend who had been a good deal in London society assured me that both in country houses and in London various kinds of orgies were occasionally to be met with which would hardly have been surpassed in the period of the most

dissolute Emperors. O War, too, I need say nothing. It has always been more or less chronic since the rise of the Roman Empire; but there is now undoubtedly a disinclination for war among all civilized peoples. Yet the vast burden of armaments taken together with the most pious declarations in favour of peace, must be held to show an almost total absence of morality as a guiding principle among the governing classes."

Under the British aegis we have learnt much, but it is my firm belief that there is little to gain from Britain's intrinsic morality that if we are not careful, we shall introduce all the vices that she has been a prey to, owing to the disease of materialism. We can profit by that connection only if, we keep our civilisation, and our morals straight, *i.e.*, if instead of boasting of the glorious past, we express the ancient moral glory in our own lives and let our lives bear witness to our past. Then we shall benefit her and ourselves. If we copy her because she provides us with rulers, both they and we shall suffer degradation. We need not be afraid of ideals or of reducing them to practice even to the utter-most. Ours will only then be a truly spiritual nation when we shall show more truth than gold, greater fearlessness than pomp of power and wealth, greater charity than love of self. If we will but clean our houses, our palaces and temples of the attributes of wealth and show in them the attributes of morality, we can offer battle to any combinations of hostile forces without having to carry the burden of a heavy militia. Let us seek first the Kingdom

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of God and His righteousness and the irrevocable promise is that everything will be added to us. These are real economics. May you and I treasure them and enforce them in our daily life.



## EDUCATION, ANCIENT AND MODERN

*[Mr. Gandhi addressed in Hindi a public meeting at Allahabad at Munshi Ram Prasad's garden under the chairmanship of the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. The gathering was a record one even for Munshi Ram Prasad's garden where some of the largest public meetings have been held] :—*

Mr. Gandhi who on rising was greeted with loud and prolonged cheers, said that that he should have felt difficulty—of which he was ashamed—in addressing the meeting in Hindi, was a striking commentary on the system of modern education which was a part of the subject of his lecture that evening. He would, however, prefer to speak in Hindi although he had greater facility of expression in English. Describing the modern system of education he said that real education was considered to have begun at the college at the age of 16 or 17. The education received in school was not useful. For instance, an Indian student, while he knew well the geography of England, did not possess a sufficient knowledge of the geography of his own country. This history of India which they were taught was greatly distorted. Government service was the aim of their education. Their

highest ambition was to become members of the Imperial Legislative Council. The boys abandoned their hereditary occupations, and forsook their mother tongue. They were adopting the English language, European ideas and European dress. They thought in English, conducted all their political and social work and all commercial transaction, etc., in English and thought that they could not do without the English language. They had come to think that there was no other road. Education through English had created a wide gulf between the educated few and the masses. It had created a gulf in the families also. An English educated man had no community of feelings and ideas with the ladies of his family. And, as had been said, the aspirations of the English educated men were fixed on Government service and at the most on membership of the Imperial Legislative Council. He for one could never commend a system of education which produced such a state of things and men educated under such system could not be expected to do any great service to the country. Mr. Gandhi did not mean that the English educated leaders did not feel for the masses. On the other hand, he acknowledged that the Congress and other great public movements were initiated and conducted by them. But, at the same time, he could not help feeling that the work done during all these years would have been much more and much greater progress would have been made if they had been taught in their mother tongue. It was unfortunate, said the speaker,

that a feeling had come over them that there was no path to progress other than that which was being followed. They found themselves helpless. But it was not manliness to assume an attitude of helplessness.

Mr. Gandhi then described the ancient system of education and said that even elementary education imparted by the village teacher taught the student all that was necessary for their occupations. Those who went in for higher education became fully conversant with the science of wealth *Artha Sastra*, ethics and religion *Dharma Sastra*. In ancient times there were no restrictions on education. It was not controlled by the State but was solely in the hands of the Brahmans who shaped the system of education solely with an eye to the welfare of the people. It was based on restraint and *Brahmacharya*. It was due to such a system of education that Indian civilization had outlived so many vicissitudes through thousands of years, while such ancient civilization as those of Greece, Rome and Egypt had become extinct. No doubt the wave of a new civilization had been passing through India. But he was sure that it was transitory, it would soon pass away and Indian civilisation would be revived. In ancient times the basis of life was self-restraint but now it was enjoyment. The result was that people had become powerless cowards and forsook the truth. Having come under the influence of another civilisation it might be necessary to adapt our own civilization in certain respects to our new environments but we should not make any radical change

in a civilization which was acknowledged even by some western scholars to be the best. It might be urged that it was necessary to adopt the methods and instruments of western civilization to meet the material forces of that civilisation. But the forces born of spirituality, the bed-rock of Indian civilization, were more than a match for material forces. India was pre-eminently the land of religion. It was the first and the last duty of Indians to maintain it as such. They should draw their strength from the Soul, from God. If they adhered to that path Swarajya which they were aspiring to and working for would become their hand-maid.

## THE MORAL BASIS OF CO-OPERATION

[At the 1917 session of the Co-operative Conference held at Bombay, Mr. Gandhi introduced a paper on "*The Moral Basis of Co-operation*." The paper reads as follows] :—

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—The only claim I have on your indulgence is that some months ago I attended with Mr. Ewbank a meeting of millhands to whom he wanted to explain the principles of co-operation. The chawl in which they were living was as filthy as it well could be. Recent rains had made matters worse. And I must frankly confess that had it not been for Mr. Ewbank's great zeal for the cause he has made his own, I should have shirked the task. But there we were, seated on a fairly worn out *charpai*, surrounded by men, women and children. Mr. Ewbank opened fire on a man who had put himself forward and who wore not a particularly innocent countenance. After he had engaged him and the other people about him in Gujarati conversation, he wanted me to speak to the people. Owing to the suspicious looks of the man who was first spoken to, I naturally pressed home the moralities of co-operation. I fancy that Mr. Ewbank rather liked the manner in

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which I handled the subject. Hence, I believe, his kind invitation to me to tax your patience for a few moments upon a consideration of co-operation from a moral standpoint.

My knowledge of the technicality of co-operation is next to nothing. My brother Devdhar has made the subject his own. Whatever he does, naturally attracts me and predisposes me to think that there must be something good in it and the handling of it must be fairly difficult. Mr. Ewbank very kindly placed at my disposal some literature too on the subject. And I have had a unique opportunity of watching the effect of some co-operative effort in Champaran. I have gone through Mr. Ewbank's ten main points which are like the commandments, and I have gone through the twelve points of Mr. Collins of Behar, which remind me of the law of the twelve tables. There are so-called agricultural banks in Champaran. They were to me disappointing efforts, if they were meant to be demonstrations of the success of co-operation. On the other hand, there is quiet work in the same direction being done by Mr. Hodge, a missionary whose efforts are leaving their impress on those who come in contact with him. Mr. Hodge is a co-operative enthusiast and probably considers that the results which he sees flowing from his efforts are due to the working of co-operation. I who was able to watch the two efforts had no hesitation in inferring that the personal equation counted for success in the one and failure in the other instance.

## *Mahatma Gandhi.*

I am an enthusiast myself, but twenty-five years of experimenting and experience have made me a cautious and discriminating enthusiast. Workers in a cause necessarily, though quite unconsciously, exaggerate its merits and often succeed in turning its very defects into advantages. In spite of my caution I consider the little institution I am conducting in Ahmedabad as the finest thing in the world. It alone gives me sufficient inspiration. Critics tell me that it represents a soulless soul-force and that its severe discipline has made it merely mechanical. I suppose both—the critics and I—are wrong. It is, at best, a humble attempt to place, at the disposal of the nation, a home where men and women may have scope for free and unfettered development of character, in keeping with the national genius, and if its controllers do not take care, the discipline that is the foundation of character may frustrate the very end in view. I would venture, therefore, to warn enthusiast in co-operation against entertaining false hopes.

With Sir Daniel Hamilton it has become a religion. On the 13th January last he addressed the students of the Scottish Churches College, and in order to point a moral he instanced Scotland's poverty of two hundred years ago and showed how that great country was raised from a condition of poverty to plenty. "There were two powers," he said, "which raised her—the Scottish Church and the Scottish banks. The Church manufactured the men and the banks manufactured the money to give the men a start in life . . . . The Church

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disciplined the nation in the fear of God which is the beginning of wisdom and in the parish schools of the Church the children learned that the chief end of man's life was to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. . . . Men were trained to believe in God and in themselves and on the trustworthy character so created the Scottish banking system was built." Sir Daniel then shows that it was possible to build up the marvellous Scottish banking system only on the character so built. So far there can only be perfect agreement with Sir Daniel, for without character there is no co-operation is a sound maxim. But he would have us go much further. He thus waxes eloquent on co-operation: "Whatever may be your day dreams of India's future never forget this that it is to weld India into one, and so enable her to take her rightful place in the world, that the British Government is here; and the welding hammer in the hand of the Government is the co-operative movement." In his opinion it is the panacea of all the evils that afflict India at the present moment. In its extended sense it can justify the claim on one condition which need not be mentioned here; in the limited sense in which Sir Daniel has used it, I venture to think, it is an enthusiast's exaggeration. Mark his peroration: "Credit, which is only Trust and Faith, is becoming more and more the money power of the world, and in the parchment bullet into which is impressed the faith which removes mountains. India will find victory and peace." Here there is evident confusion of thought. The credit



which is becoming the money power of the world has little moral basis and is not synonym for Trust or Faith which are purely moral qualities. After twenty years' experience of hundreds of men, who had dealings with banks in South Africa, the opinion I had so often heard expressed has become firmly rooted in me, that the greater the rascal the greater the credit he enjoys with his banks. The banks do not pry into his moral character. They are satisfied that he meets his overdrafts and promissary notes punctually. The credit system has encircled this beautiful globe of ours like a serpent's coil, and if we do not mind, it bids fair to crush us out of breath. I have witnessed the ruin of many a home through the system, and it has made no difference whether the credit was labelled co-operative or otherwise. The deadly coil has made possible the devastating spectacle in Europe, which we are helplessly looking on. It was perhaps never so true as it is to-day that as in law so in war the longest purse finally wins. I have ventured to give prominence to the current belief about credit system in order to emphasize the point that the co-operative movement will be a blessing to India only to the extent that it is a moral movement strictly directed by men fired with religious fervour. It follows, therefore that co-operation should be confined to men wishing to be morally right, but failing to do so, because of grinding poverty or of the grip of the Mahajan. Facility for obtaining loans at fair rates will not make immoral or unmoral men moral. But the

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wisdom of the state or philanthropists demands that they should help, on the onward path, men struggling to be good.

Too often do we believe that material prosperity means moral growth.\* It is necessary that a movement which is fraught with so much good to India should not degenerate into one for merely advancing cheap loans. I was therefore delighted to read the recommendation in the Report of the Committee on Co-operation in India, that "they wish clearly to express their opinion that it is to true co-operation alone, that is, to a co-operation, which recognises the moral aspect of the question, that Government must look for the amelioration of the masses and not to a pseudo-co-operative edifice, however imposing, which is built in ignorance of co-operative principles. With this standard before us, we will not measure of success of the movement by the number of co-operative societies formed, but by the moral condition of the co-operators. The Registrars will in that event ensure the moral growth of existing societies before multiplying them. And the Government will make their promotion conditional, not upon the number of societies they have registered, but the moral success of the existing institutions. This will mean tracing the course of every *pie* lent to the members. Those responsible for the proper conduct of co-operative societies will see to it that the money advanced does not find its way into the toddy-seller's till or into the pockets of the keepers of gambling dens. I would excuse the rapacity of the

Mahajan if it has succeeded in keeping the gambling den or 'toddy shop from the ryot's home.

A word perhaps about the Mahajan will not be out of place. Co-operation is not a new device. The ryots co-operate to drum out monkeys or birds that destroy their crops. They co-operate to use a common threshing floor. I have found them co-operate to protect their cattle to the extent of their devoting their best land for the grazing of their cattle. And they have been found co-operating against a particularly rapacious Mahajan. Doubt has been expressed as to the success of co-operation because of the tightness of the Mahajan's hold on the ryots. I do not share the fears. The mightiest Mahajan must, if he represents an evil force, bend before co-operation, conceived as an essentially moral movement. But my limited experience of the Mahajan of Champaran has made me revise the accepted opinion about his 'blighting influence.' I have found him to be not always relentless, not always exacting of the last pie. He sometimes serves his clients in many ways or even comes to their rescue in the hour of their distress. My observation is so limited that I dare not draw any conclusions from it, but I respectfully enquire whether it is not possible to make a serious effort to draw out the good in the Mahajan and help him or induce him to throw out the evil in him. May he not be induced to join the army of co-operation, or has experience proved that he is past praying for?

I note that the movement takes note of all indegen-

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ous industries. I beg publicly to express my gratitude to Government for helping me in my humble effort to improve the lot of the weaver. The experiment I am conducting shows that there is a vast field for work in this direction. No well wisher of India, no patriot dare look upon the impending destruction of the hand-loom weaver with equanimity. As Dr. Mann has stated, this industry, used to supply the peasant with an additional source of livelihood and an insurance against famine. Every Registrar who will nurse back to life this important and graceful industry will earn the gratitude of India. My humble effort consists firstly in making researches as to the possibilities of simple reforms in the orthodox hand-loom, secondly in weaning the educated youth from the craving for Government or other service and the feeling that education renders him unfit for independent occupation and in inducing him to take to weaving as a calling as honourable as that of a barrister or a doctor, and thirdly by helping those weavers who have abandoned their occupation to revert to it. I will not weary the audience with any statement on the first two parts of the experiment. The third may be allowed a few sentences as it has a direct bearing upon the subject before us. I was able to enter upon it only six months ago. Five families that had left off the calling have reverted to it and they are doing a prosperous business. The Ashram supplies them at the door with the yarn they need ; its volunteers take delivery of the cloth woven, paying them cash at the market rate

The Ashram merely loses interest on the loan advanced for the yarn. It has as yet suffered no loss and is able to restrict its loss to a minimum by limiting the loan to a particular figure. All future transactions are strictly cash. We are able to command a ready sale for the cloth received. The loss of interest, therefore, on the transaction is negligible. I would like the audience to note its purely moral character from start to finish. The Ashram depends for its existence on such help as *friends* render it. We, therefore, can have no warrant for charging interest. The weavers could not be saddled with it. Whole families that were breaking to pieces are put together again. The use of the loan is predetermined. And we the middlemen being volunteers obtain the privilege of entering into the lives of these families, I hope for their and our betterment. We cannot lift them without being lifted ourselves. This last relationship has not yet been developed, but we hope at an early date to take in hand the education too of these families and not rest satisfied till we have touched them at every point. This is not too ambitious a dream. God willing, it will be a reality some day. I have ventured to dilate upon the small experiment to illustrate what I mean by co-operation to present it to others for imitation. Let us be sure of our ideal. We shall ever fail to realise it, but we should never cease to strive for it. Then there need be no fear of "co-operation of scoundrels" that Ruskin so rightly dreaded.

## INDIAN COLONIAL EMIGRATION

I have carefully read the resolution issued at Simla by the Government of India on the 1st instant (September 1917) embodying the report of the Inter-Departmental Conference recently held in London. It will be remembered that this was the Conference referred to in the Viceregal speech of last year at the opening of the sessions of the Viceregal Legislative Council. It will be remembered, too, that this was the Conference which Sir James Meston and Sir S. P. Sinha were to have attended, but were unable to attend owing to their having returned to India before the date of the meeting of the Conference. It is stated in the report under discussion that these gentlemen were able to discuss the question of emigration to certain English Colonies informally with the two Secretaries of State, *i.e.*, the Secretary of State for India and the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Lord Islington, Sir A. Steel Maitland, and Messrs. Seton, Grindle, Green and Macnaughton constituted the Conference. To take the wording of the resolution, this Conference sat "to consider the proposals for a new assisted system of emigration to British Guinea, Trinidad, Jamaica and

Fiji." The public should, therefore, note that this assisted emigration is to be confined only to the four Crown Colonies mentioned and not to the Self-Governing Colonies of South Africa, Canada or Australia, or the Crown Colony of Mauritius. What follows will show the importance of this distinction. It is something to be thankful for that "the Government of India have not yet considered the report and reserved judgment on all the points raised in it." This is as it should be on a matter so serious as this and one which only last year fairly convulsed the whole of India and which as in one shape or another agitated the country since 1895.

The declaration too that "His Majesty's Government in agreement with the Government of India have decided that indentured emigration shall not be reopened" is welcome as is also the one that "no free emigrants can be introduced into any Colony until all Indian emigrants already there have been released from existing indentures."

In spite, however, of so much in the report that fills one with gladness, the substantive part of it which sets forth the scheme which is to replace indentured emigration is, so far as one can judge, to say the least of it, disappointing. Stripped of all the phraseology under which the scheme has been veiled, it is nothing less than a system of indentured emigration no doubt on a more humane basis and safeguarded with some conditions beneficial to the emigrants taking advantage of it.

The main point that should be borne in mind is that

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the Conference sat designedly to consider a scheme of emigration not in the interests of the Indian labourer, but in those of the colonial employer. The new system, therefore, is devised to help the Colonies concerned. India needs no outlet, at any rate for the present moment, for emigration outside the country. It is debateable whether in any event the four Colonies will be the most suitable for Indian Colonisation. The best thing, therefore, that can happen from an Indian standpoint is that there should be no assisted emigration from India of any type whatsoever. In the absence of any such assistance-emigration will have to be entirely free and at the risk and expense of the emigrant himself. Past experience shows that in that event there will be very little voluntary emigration to distant Colonies. In the report assisted emigration means, to use a mild expression, stimulated emigration; and surely with the industries of India crying out for labour and with her legitimate resources yet undeveloped, it is madness to think of providing a stimulus for the stay-at-home Indian to go out of India. Neither the Government nor any voluntary agency has been found capable of protecting from ill usage the Indian who emigrates either to Burma or Ceylon, much less can any such protection avail in far off Fiji or the three other Colonies. I hope that leaders of public opinion in India will, therefore, take their stand on the one impregnable rock of not wanting any emigration whatsoever to the Colonies. It might be argued that we, as a component part of the Empire, are bound



to consider the wants of our partners, but this would not be a fair plea to advance so long as India stands in need of all the labour she can produce, if, therefore India does not assist the Colonies, it is not because of want of will, but it is due to want of ability. An additional reason a politician would be justified in using is that, so long as India does not in reality occupy the position of an equal partner with the Colonies and so long as her sons continue to be regarded by Englishmen in the Colonies and English employers even nearer home to be fit only as hewers of wood and drawers of water, no scheme of emigration to the Colonies can be morally advantageous to Indian emigrants. If the badge of inferiority is always to be worn by them, they can never rise to their full status, and any material advantage they will gain by emigrating can, therefore, be of no consideration.

But let us for the moment consider the new system. "The system," it is stated, "to be followed in future will be one of aided emigration, and its object will be to encourage the settlements of Indians in certain Colonies after a probationary period of employment in those Colonies, to train and fit them for life and work there and at the same time to acquire a supply of the labour essential to the well-being of the colonists themselves." So the re-settlement is to be conditional on previous employment under contract, and it will be seen in the course of our examination that this contract is to be just as binding as the contracts used to be under indenture. The report has the following humorous passage in

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“He will be in no way restricted to service under any particular employer except that for his own protection, a selected employer will be chosen for him for the first six months.” This has a flavour of the old indentured system. One of the evils complained of about that system was that the labourer was assigned to an employer. He was not free to choose one himself. Under the new system, the employer is to be selected for the protection of the labourer. It is hardly necessary for me to point out that the would be labourer will never be able to feel the protection devised for him. The labourer is further “to be encouraged to work for his first three years in agricultural industries, by the offer, should he do so, of numerous and important benefits subsequently as a colonist.” This is another inducement to indenture, and I know enough of such schemes to be able to assure both the Government and public that these so-called inducements in the hands of clever manipulators become nothing short of methods of compulsion in respect of innocent and ignorant Indian labourers. It is due to the framers of the scheme that I should draw attention to the fact that they have avoided all criminal penalties for breach of contract. In India, itself, if the scheme is adopted, we are promised a revival of the much dreaded depots and Emigration Agents, all no doubt on a more respectable basis, but still of the same type and capable of untold mischief.

The rest of the report is not likely to interest the public but those who wish to study it will, I doubt not,

come to the conclusion to which I have been driven, that the framers have done their best to strip the old system of many of the abuses which had crept into it, but they have not succeeded in placing before the Indian public an acceptable scheme. I hold that it was an impossible task. The system of indenture was one of temporary slavery; it was incapable of being amended; it should only be ended and it is to be hoped that India will never consent to its revival in any shape or form. —(*Indian Review*).

## INDIAN RAILWAYS

I have now been in India far over two years and a half after my return from South Africa. Over one quarter of that time I have passed on the Indian trains travelling 3rd class by choice. I have travelled up north as far as Lahore, down South up to Tranqubar, and from Karachi to Calcutta. Having resorted to 3rd class travelling among other reasons for the purpose of studying the conditions under which this class of passengers travel, I have naturally made as critical observations as I could. I have fairly covered the majority of railway systems during this period. Now and then I have entered into correspondence with the management of the different Railways about the defects that have come under my notice. But I think that the time has come when I should invite the Press and the Public to join in a crusade against a grievance which has too long remained unredressed though much of it is capable of redress without great difficulty.

On the 12th instant (September 1917) I booked at Bombay for Madras by the Mail train and paid Rs. 13-9-0. It was labelled to carry 22 passengers. These could only have seating accommodation. There

were no bunks in this carriage whereon passengers could lie with any degree of safety or comfort. There were two nights to be passed in this train before reaching Madras. If not more than 22 passengers found their way into my carriage before we reached Poona, it was because the bolder ones kept the others at bay. With the exception of two or three insistent passengers all had to find their sleep being seated all the time. After reaching Raichur the pressure became unbearable. The rush of passengers could not be stayed. The fighters among us found the task almost beyond them. The guards or other railway servants came in only to push in more passengers. A defiant Menon merchant protested against this packing of passengers like sardines. In vain did he say that this was his fifth night on the train. The guard insulted him and referred him to the management at the Terminus. There were during this time as many as 35 passengers in the carriage during the greater part of it. Some lay on the floor in the midst of dirt and some had to keep standing. A free fight was at one time avoided only by the intervention of some of the older passengers who did not want to add to the discomfort by an exhibition of temper.

On the way, passengers got down for tea tannin-water with filthy sugar and a whitish looking liquid miscalled milk which gave this water a muddy appearance.\* I can vouch for the appearance but I cite the testimony of the passengers as to the taste.

Not during the whole of the journey was the com-

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partment once swept or cleaned. The result was that every time you walked on the floor, or rather cut your way through the passengers seated on the floor, you waded through dirt.

The closet was also not cleaned during the journey and there was no water in the water tank.

Refreshments sold to the passengers were dirty looking, handled by dirtier hands, coming out of filthy receptacles and weighed in equally unattractive scales. These were previously sampled by millions of flies. I asked some of the passengers who went in for these dainties to give their opinion. Many of them used choice expressions as to the quality but were satisfied to state they were helpless in the matter ; they had to take things as they came.

On reaching the station I found that the ghari-wala would not take me unless I paid the fare he wanted. I mildly protested and told him I would pay him the authorised fare. I had to turn a passive resister before I could be taken. I simply told him he would have to pull me out or call the policeman.

The return journey was performed in a better manner. The carriage was packed already and but for a friend's intervention I would not have been able to secure even a seat. My admission was certainly beyond the authorised number. This compartment was constructed to carry 9 passengers but it had constantly 12 in it. At one place an impertinent railway servant swore at a protestant and threatened to strike him and locked the door

over the passenger whom he had with difficulty squeezed in. To this compartment there was a closet falsely so-called. It was designed as a European closet but could hardly be used as such. There was a pipe in it but no water and I say without fear of challenge that it was pestilentially dirty.

The compartment itself was evil looking. Dirt was lying thick upon the wood work and I do not know that it had ever seen soap or water.

This compartment had an exceptional assortment of passengers. There were three stalwart Punjabi Mohammedans, two refined Tamilians and two Mohammedan merchants who joined us later. The merchant related the bribes they had to give to procure comfort. One of the Punjabis had already travelled three nights and was weary and fatigued. But he could not stretch himself. He said he had sat the whole day at the Central Station watching passengers giving bribes to procure their tickets. Another said he had himself to pay Rs. 5 before he could get his ticket and his seat. These three men were bound for Ludhiana and had still more nights of travel in store for them.

What I have described is not exceptional but normal. I have got down at Raichur, Dhond, Sonapur, Chakradharpur, Purulis, Asansol and other junction stations and been at the Mosafirkhanas attached to these stations. They are discreditable-looking places where there is no order, no cleanliness but utter confusion and horrible din and noise. Passengers have no benches or

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not enough to sit on. They squat on dirty floors and eat dirty food. They are permitted to throw the leavings of their food and spit where they like, sit how they like and smoke every where. The closets attached to these places defy description. I have not the power to adequately describe them without committing a breach of the laws of decent speech. Disinfecting powder, ashes or disinfecting fluid are unknown. The army of flies buzzing about them warns you against their use. But a 3rd class traveller is dumb and helpless. He does not want to complain even though to go to these places, may be to court death. I know passengers who fast while they are travelling just in order to lessen the misery of their life in the trains. At Sonapur flies having failed, wasps have come forth to warn the public and the authorities but yet to no purpose. At the Imperial Capital a certain 3rd class booking office is a Black Hole fit only to be destroyed.

Is it any wonder that plague has become epidemic in India? Any other result is impossible where passengers always leave some dirt where they go and take more on leaving?

On Indian trains alone passengers smoke with impunity in all carriages irrespective of the presence of the fair sex and irrespective of the protests of nonsmokers and notwithstanding byelaw which prevents a passenger from smoking without the permission of his fellow passengers in a compartment which is not allotted to smokers.



The existence of the awful war cannot be allowed to stand in the way of removal of this gigantic evil. War can be no warrant for tolerating dirt and over crowding. One could understand an entire stoppage of passenger traffic in a crisis like this but never a continuation or accentuation of insanitation and conditions that must undermine health and morality.

Compare the lot of the 1st class passenger with that of the 3rd class. In the Madras case the 1st class fare is over five times as much as the 3rd class fare. Does the 3rd class passenger get one fifth, even one tenth, of the comfort of his 1st class fellow? It is but simple justice to claim that relative proportions be observed between the cost and the comfort.

It is a known fact that the 3rd class traffic pays for the ever-increasing luxuries of 1st and 2nd class travelling. Surely a 3rd class passenger is entitled at least to the bare necessities of life.

In neglecting the 3rd class passengers an opportunity of giving a splendid education to millions in orderliness, sanitation, decent composite life, and cultivation of simple and clean tastes is being lost. Instead of receiving an object lesson in these matters 3rd class passengers have their sense of decency and cleanliness blunted during their travelling experience.

Among the many suggestions that can be made for dealing with the evil here described I would respectfully include this : Let the people in high places, the Viceroy, Commander-in-Chief, the Rajahs, the Maharajas, the

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Imperial Councillors and others who generally travel in superior classes, without previous warning go through the experience now and then of 3rd class travelling. We would then soon see a remarkable change in the conditions of the 3rd class travelling and the uncomplaining millions will get some return for the fares they pay under the expectation of being carried from place to place with the ordinary creature comforts.

## GUJARAT EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

*[The second Gujarat Educational Conference was held at Brouch, in October 20, 1917, when Mr. M. K. Gandhi read his presidential address in Gujarati a translation of which reads as under] :—*

- After thanking the conference for the honour bestowed on him he said the selection fell on him simply because he would yield to none in his love and devotion for the Gujarati language. He then congratulated the last conference on the good work done by them and for publishing a very valuable report in time. He then highly regretted the premature loss of Mr. Ranjitram Vavabhai, one of the most active secretaries of the conference. Recapitulating the three objects of the Gujarat Kālavani Mandal under whose auspices the conference was held, he proceeded to treat them in detail.

### MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

He regarded the question of the medium of instruction of the highest importance and as one on which the whole edifice of education rested. He referred to the two views held on this question. There is one party that wants the mother tongue Gujarati to be the

medium. The other party supports English. Both are prompted by pure motives. Both have the good of the country at heart but purity of motives alone is not sufficient for the achievement of the desired end. Experience of the world shows that often a pure motive lands us on impure ground. Let us therefore examine the merits or otherwise of the two views and see if we can arrive at unanimity on this point. This difficult question concerns the whole of India. But that does not mean that each province cannot solve it for itself, but must wait for general unanimity.

Of course, it would help us to some degree in the solution of this problem if we review the agitation and efforts of other provinces. Bengal during the excitement of the 'partition' days tried to impart instruction in Bengali. Schools were established, funds poured in but the experiment failed. In my humble opinion it failed, because the organisers and teachers had not sufficient faith in their own experiment. The educated Bengali could not get out of the fascination of the English language. It was suggested that Bengali literature owes its development to the command the Bengalis have over the English language. In answer Mr. Gandhi instanced the wonderful Bengali of Sir Rabindranath Tagore which is in no way indebted to his knowledge of English. He owes inspiration to the very atmosphere of India. He has imbibed it from the Upanishads. The same can be said of Mahatma Munshi Ram and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. The service which Swami

Dayanand Sarasvati rendered to Hindi literature owed nothing to English. Tukaram and Ramdas who have enriched the Marathi language were not in the least under the obligation of the English language. English cannot claim any credit for the contribution to Gujarati literature of poets from Parmanand and Samel Bhat down to Dalpatram. When we consider how languages grow, we come to the conclusion that a language is but the reflection of the character of the people that speak it. Language depends upon the peculiar genius and occupation of a people. The inordinate use of polished and courtly forms of speech indicate that we have been under subjection for generations together. The English language abounds in nautical terms. We cannot import them in the Gujarati language, but if we take to navigation nautical phraseology will frame of itself.

Mr. Gandhi then proceeded to give a quotation from Rev. Taylor's grammar of the Gujarati language in support of the above.

He then referred to the laudable efforts of the Arya Samaj in making Hindi the medium of instruction in their *Gurukul*; and of the Telugu people in using Telugu as the vehicle of education. In Maharashtra Professor Karve and Prof. Naick both work in the same direction. In Professor Bijapurkar's school they had already prepared suitable text-books in Marathi. They are all hopeful about the success of their work. In Gujarat there was a movement already for imparting instruction through Gujarati. Prof. Gajjar and the late Dewan

Bahadur Manibhai Jarbhai may be regarded as the pioneers and it now remains with us to consider whether we shall water the plant sown by them or allow it to wither away.

Experienced teachers say that what takes sixteen years to learn through English can perfectly be acquired in ten years at the most through the vernaculars. If thousands of our students save six years each of their precious life, what a great national saving it would be.

The excessive burden of having to learn through a foreign medium has sapped the strength, enthusiasm and vitality of our young men. Sickly and pale they can at best be mere imitators. All power of initiative, originality and enterprise ; courage, discrimination and fearlessness dwindle away as years pass by- What they commence they cannot carry out. The few that show some spirit die young. The negroes of South Africa are a stalwart and sober race. Social evils like child-marriage are unknown amongst them but they too have suffered like ourselves because they accepted Dutch as the medium of their education. They have grown impotent imitators of the west. With the loss of their mother tongue they lost all vigour and originality. We who have received English education cannot measure the loss we have sustained. If we consider what little hold we have upon our masses we can have some idea of that loss. We are proud of a Bose or a Ray amongst us but I dare say that had we received instruction through the vernacular for the last fifty years we would have had

amongst us so many Boses and Rays that their existence would not have been a matter of surprise to us.

Leaving aside the question whether Japan's activities are in the right direction or not we can say that the extraordinary enterprise and progressive life they have shown is due to their education being given in Japanese. Their education has infused a new life among the people which has been a wonder to the gaping world. Instruction through a foreign medium brings about untold evils.

• There must be a correspondence between the impressions and expressions we receive with our mother's milk and the education we receive at school. A foreign medium destroys the correspondence, and whosoever helps this destruction, however pure his motives, is an enemy of his country. The evil does not stop here. The foreign medium has created an unnatural gulf between the educated classes and the masses at large. We do not understand the masses and the masses do not understand us. They regard us as foreigners and they fear and distrust us. If this state of things continues for long, Lord Curzon's charge that we do not represent the masses will some day prove to be true. Fortunately the educated classes have gradually come to realise the difficulty of reaching the masses. They see now that they have over reached the expectations of Lord Macaulay. We took to English because it led to the acquisition of wealth, and some cultivated the ideas of nationalism through English.

## *Gujrat Educational Conference.*

If we were in power we could see the danger of the spread of English at the cost of the vernacular. Even the Government offices have not dispensed with the vernaculars. In offices and law courts they still use the vernaculars. If pleaders conducted their cases in the vernaculars, the clients would gain a great deal, and the language would be enriched.

It is argued that only the English knowing Indians have evinced patriotism. Recent event prove otherwise, but even accepting the assertion we can say that others had no opportunity whatsoever. The patriotism of the English educated has not spread amongst the masses. English may be kept as an optional subject for those who want to study it for political purposes or for the acquisition of wealth by the help of western sciences. Not only should they acquire a good command over the English language but it is also our duty to make facilities for imparting such education.

Before closing this topic he referred to the two pamphlets published by Dr. P. J. Mehta and recommended the audience to peruse them. He then suggested a number of ways and means for preparing a ground for making Gujarati as the medium of instruction such as the use of Gujarati language only in mutual intercourse among the Gujaratis, preparation of Gujarati text-books, opening schools, etc.

### NATIONAL LANGUAGE

After dealing with the medium of instruction he dealt at length upon the subject of National language.



He gave an able reply to those who suggest that English ought to become the *lingua franca* of India. He said a national language should satisfy the following five conditions :—

- (1) It must be easy for the official.
- (2) It must be the vehicle of religious, social and political intercourse of the people.
- (3) It must be spoken by a large number.
- (4) It must be easy of acquisition by the masses.
- (5) It must not be considered a temporary makeshift arrangement.

He then showed how English does not satisfy any of these conditions. He proved that Hindi is the only language that satisfies all these conditions. Hindi was our national language even under the Mahomedaen rule and the Mahomedan rulers did not think it proper to substitute it with Persian or Arabic.

He then pointed out the defects in the method of teaching history, geography, science and mathematics. He then also referred to the non-provision of such subjects as music, agriculture, military training, weaving, religion and hygiene.

## ADVICE TO THE MERCHANTS

*[In reply to the address given to him by the merchants of Broach, Mr. Gandhi said] :—*

Merchants always have the spirit of adventure, intellect and wealth, as without these qualities their business cannot go on. But now they must have the fervour of patriotism in them. Patriotism is necessary even for religion. If the spirit of patriotism is awakened through the religious fervour, then that patriotism will shine out brilliantly. So it is necessary that patriotism must be roused in the mercantile community.

The merchants take more part in public affairs now-a-days than before. When merchants take to politics through patriotism, Swaraj is as good as obtained. Some of you might be wondering how we can get Swaraj. I lay my hand on my heart and say that, when the merchant class understands the spirit of patriotism, then only can we get Swaraj quickly. Swaraj then will be quite a natural thing.

Amongst the various keys which will unlock Swaraj to us, the Swadeshi Vow is the golden one. It is in the hands of the merchants to compel the observance of the Swadeshi Vow in the country, and this is an

adventure which can be popularised by the merchants. I humbly request you to undertake this adventure, and then you will see what wonders you can do.

This being so, I have to say with regret that it is the merchant class which has brought ruin to the Swadeshi practice, and the Swadeshi movement in this country. Complaints have lately risen in Bengal about the increase of rates, and one of them is against Gujarat. It is complained there that the prices of Dhotis have been abnormally increased and Dhotis go from Gujarat. No one wants you not to earn money, but it must be earned righteously and not be ill-gotten. Merchants must earn money by fair means. Unfair means must never be used.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said: India's strength lies with the merchant class. So much does not lie even with the army. Trade is the cause of war, and the merchant class has the key of war in their hands. Merchants raise the money and the army is raised on the strength of it. The power of England and Germany rests on their trading class. A country's prosperity depends upon its mercantile community. I consider it as a sign of good luck that I should receive an address from the merchant class. Whenever I remember Broach, I will enquire if the merchants who have given me an address this day have righteous faith and patriotism. If I receive a disappointing reply, I will think that merely a wave of giving addresses had come over India and that I had a share in it.

## VARNACULARS AS A MEDIA OF INSTRUCTION

It is to be hoped that Dr. Mehta's labour of love will receive the serious attention of English-Educated India. The following pages were written by him for the *Vedantu Kesari* of Madras and are now printed in their present form for circulation throughout India. The question of vernaculars as media of instruction is of national importance; neglect of the vernaculars means national suicide. One hears many protagonists of the English language being continued as the medium of instruction pointing to the fact that English educated Indians are the sole custodians of public and patriotic work. It would be monstrous if it were not so. For, the only education given in this country is through the English language. The fact, however, is that the results are not at all proportionate to the time we give to our education. We have not reacted on the masses. But I must not anticipate Dr. Mehta. He is in earnest. He writes feelingly. He has examined the *pros* and *cons* and collected a mass of evidence in support of his arguments. The latest pronouncement on the subject is that of the Viceroy. Whilst His Excellency is unable to

offer a solution, he is keenly alive to the necessity of imparting instruction in our schools through the vernaculars. The Jews of middle and Eastern Europe, who are scattered in all parts of the world, finding it necessary to have a common tongue for mutual intercourse, have raised Yiddish to the status of a language, and have succeeded in translating into Yiddish the best books to be found in the world's literature. Even they could not satisfy the soul's yearning through the many, foreign tongues of which they are masters; nor did the learned few among them wish to tax the masses of the Jewish population with having to learn a foreign language before they could realise their dignity. So they have enriched what was at one time looked upon as a mere jargon—but what the Jewish children learnt from their mothers—by taking special pains to translate into it the best thought of the world. This is a truly marvellous work. It has been done during the present generation and Webster's Dictionary defines it as a polyglot jargon used for inter-communication by Jews from different nations.

But a Jew of middle and Eastern Europe would feel insulted if his mother-tongue were now so described. If these Jewish scholars have succeeded, within a generation, in giving their masses a language of which they may feel proud, surely it should be an easy task for us to supply the needs of our own vernaculars, which are cultured languages. South Africa teaches us the same lesson. There was a duel there between the Taal, a corrupt form

of Dutch, and English. The Boer mothers and the Boer fathers were determined that they would not let their children, with whom they in their infancy talked in the Taal, be weighed down with having to receive instruction through English. The case for English here was a strong one. It had able pleaders for it. But English had to yield before Boer patriotism. It may be observed that they rejected even the high Dutch. The school masters, therefore, who are accustomed to speak the polished Dutch of Europe, are compelled to teach the easier Taal. And literature of an excellent character is at the present moment growing up in South Africa in the Taal, which was only a few years ago, the common medium of speech between simple but brave rustics. If we have lost faith in our vernaculars, it is a sign of want of faith in ourselves; it is the surest sign of decay. And no scheme of self-Government however benevolently or generously it may be bestowed upon us, will ever make us a self-governing nation, if we have no respect for the languages our mothers speak.—(*Introduction contributed to Dr. P. J. Mehta's Pamphlet, No. 1*).

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT.

*[Mr. M. K. Gandhi in submitting an account of the Indian Committee of the income and expenditure up to the 31st January, 1915, in connection with the Passive resistance in South Africa made the following observations]:—*

This struggle had defined principles and removed disabilities which were in the shape of a national insult. The larger question of the treatment of British Indians who come from outside can be dealt with here. For the question of the local disabilities still unredressed, the Indian Committee will have to exercise a ceaseless watch and assist, as heretofore, the efforts of our countrymen in South Africa. I feel that I ought to place on record my strong-conviction based upon the close personal observation extending over a period of twenty years that the system of indentured emigration is an evil which cannot be mended, but can only be ended. No matter how humane employers may be, it does not lead itself to the moral well-being of the men affected by it. I, therefore, feel that your committee should lose no time in approaching the Government of India with a view to

*Income and Expenditure Account.*

securing the entire abolition of the system for every part of the Empire. I am bound to mention that the struggle would not have ended so soon or even as satisfactorily as it did, but for the generous support rendered by the Motherland under the leadership of the great and saintly patriot, the late Mr. Gokhale, and but for the very sympathetic and firm attitude taken by the nobleman who at present occupies the Viceregal chair.



## HISTORY OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

*Mr. Gandhi in the course of his letter to the Secretary, South African Committee, gives the following brief account of the struggle of passive resisters in South Africa, to the maintenance of which India contributed so generously,*

“Whilst the actual courting of imprisonment has ceased, the struggle itself has by no means ended. In its last stages nearly 25,000 Indians actively participated in it, that is one sixth of the total Indian population in South Africa. The rest of the community practically with but few exceptions, supported the struggle either by contribution in cash or in kind or by holding meetings, etc. It began in Transvaal with the passing of the now famous Asiatic Registration Bill. In the year the struggle rolled on with temporary settlements. It included many other things besides the Asiatic Registration Act, and covered the whole of South Africa at the time of the settlement. The points in the passive resistance were as follows: (1) Repeal of the Asiatic Act. (2) Removal of racial or colour disqualification as to immigration from Union legislation. (3) Removal of annual

*History of Passive Resistance in South Africa.*

Poll Tax of £3 which was payable by ex-indentured Indians, their wives and grown-up children. (4) Just administration of the existing laws with due regard to be a complete vindication of the passive resistance, and I venture to state that if more has not been gained more was not and could not be asked for as an item in the passive resistance, for a passive resister has to frame his minimum as well as his maximum, and he dare not ask for more nor can he be satisfied with less.

## FUTURE WORK.

But I do not wish to be understood to mean that nothing further remains to be done in South Africa, or that everything has been gained. We have only fought for the removal of legal disabilities as to immigration, but administratively we have taken note of the existing conditions and prejudices. We fought to keep the theory of the British Constitution in that so that the practice may some day approach the theory as near as possible. There are still certain laws of 1885, the trade license laws of the Cape and Natal, which continue to cause worry. The administration of the Immigration Law is not at all that it should be. For these, however, passive resistance is not applied and is at present inapplicable, its application being confined to grievances which are generally felt in a community and are known to hurt its self-respect or conscience. Any of the grievances referred to by me may, any day, advance to that stage. Till then, only the ordinary remedies of petition etc., can be adopted. Letters received from South Africa, show that difficulties are being experienced in some cases acutely by our countrymen, and if much has not been heard of them in India just now, it is because of the extraordinary self-restraint of our countrymen in South Africa, during the crisis that has overtaken the Empire.

## AHIMSA

There seem to be no historical warrant for the belief that an exaggerated practice of Ahimsa synchronised with our becoming bereft of manly virtues! During the past 1,500 years we have, as a nation, given ample proof of physical courage, but we have been torn by internal dissensions and have been dominated by love of self instead of love of country. We have, that is to say, been swayed by the spirit of irreligion rather than of religion.

I do not know how far the charge of unmanliness can be made good against the Jains. I hold no brief for them. By birth I am a Vaishnavite, and was taught Ahimsa in my childhood. I have derived much religious benefit from Jain religious works as I have from scriptures of the other great faiths of the world. I owe much to the living company of the deceased philosopher Rajachand Kavi, who was Jain by birth. Thus, though my views on Ahimsa are a result of my study of most of the faiths of the world, they are now no longer dependent upon the authority of these works. They are a part of my life, and if I suddenly discovered that the religious books read by me bore a different interpretation from

the one I had learnt to give them, I should still hold to the view of Ahimsa as I am about to set forth here.

Our Shastras seem to teach that a man who really practises Ahimsa in its fullness has the world at his feet ; he so affects his surroundings that even the snakes and other venomous reptiles do him no harm. This is said to have been the experience of St. Francis of Assisi.

In its negative form it means not injuring any living being whether by body or mind. I may not, therefore, hurt the person of any wrong-doer or bear any ill-will to him and so cause him mental suffering. This statement does not cover suffering caused to the wrong-doer by natural acts of mine which do not proceed from ill-will. It, therefore, does not prevent me from withdrawing from his presence a child whom he, we shall imagine, is about to strike. Indeed, the proper practice of Ahimsa *requires* me to withdraw the intended victim from the wrong-doer, if I am in any way whatsoever the guardian of such a child. It was, therefore most proper for the passive resister of South Africa to have resisted the evil that the Union Government sought to do them. They bore no ill-will to it. They showed this by helping the Government whenever it needed their help. *Their resistance consisted of disobedience of the order of the Government, even to the extent of suffering death at their hands.* Ahimsa requires deliberate self-suffering, not a deliberate injuring of the supposed wrong-doer.

In its positive form, Ahimsa means the largest love,

the greatest charity. If I am a follower of Ahimsa, I *must love my enemy*. I must apply the same rules to the wrong-doer who is my enemy or a stranger to me, as I would to my wrong-doing father or son. This active Ahimsa necessarily includes truth and fearlessness. A man cannot deceive the loved one, he does not fear or frighten him or her. Gift of life is the greatest of all gifts. A man who gives it in reality, disarms all hostility. He has paved the way for an honourable understanding. And none who is himself subject to fear can bestow that gift. He must, therefore, be himself fearless. A man cannot then practice Ahimsa and be a coward at the same time. The practice of Ahimsa calls forth the greatest courage. It is the most soldierly of soldier's virtues. General Gordon has been represented in a famous statue as bearing only a stick. This takes us far on the road to Ahimsa. But a soldier, who needs the protection of even a sick, is to that extent so much the less a soldier. He is the true soldier who knows how to die and stand on his ground in the midst of a hail of bullets. Such a one was Ambarish, who stood his ground without lifting a finger though Durvasa did his worst. The Moors who were being pounded by the French gunners and who rushed to the guns' mouths with 'Allah' on their lips, showed much the same type of courage. Only theirs was the courage of desperation. Ambarisha's was due to love. Yet the Moorish valour, readiness to die, conquered the gunners. They frantically waved their hats, ceased firing, and greeted their

erstwhile enemies as comrades. And so the South African 'passive resisters in their thousands were ready to die rather than sell their honour for a little personal ease. This was Ahimsa in its active form- It *never* batters away honour.' A helpless girl in the hands of a follower of Ahimsa finds better and surer protection than in the hands of one who is prepared to defend her only to the point to which his weapons would carry him. The tyrant, in the first instance, will have to walk to his victim over the dead body of her defender; in the second, he has but to overpower the defender; for it is assumed that the canon of propriety in the second instance will be satisfied which the defender has fought to the extent of his physical valour. In the first instance, as the defender has matched his very soul against the mere body of the tyrant, the odds are that the soul in the latter will be awakened, and the girl would stand an infinitely greater chance of her honour being protected than in any other conceivable circumstance, barring, of course, that of her own personal courage.

If we are unmanly to-day, we are so, not because we do not know how to strike, but because we fear to die. He is no follower of Mahavira, the apostle of Jainism, or of Buddha or of the Vedas, who being afraid to die, takes flight before any danger, real or imaginary, all the while wishing that somebody else would remove the danger by destroying the person causing it. He is no follower of Ahimsa who does not care a straw if he kills a man by inches by deceiving him in trade, or who would

### *Ahimsa.*

protect by force of arms a few cows and make away with the butcher, or who, in order to do a supposed good to his country, does not mind killing of a few officials. All these are actuated by hatred, cowardice, and fear. Here love of the cow or the country is a vague thing intended to satisfy one's vanity or soothe a stinging conscience.

Ahimsa, truly understood, is, in my humble opinion, a panacea for all evils mundane and extramundane. We can never overdo it. Just at present we are not doing at all. Ahimsa does not displace the practice of other virtues, but renders their practice imperatively necessary before it can be practised even in its rudiments. Mahavira and Buddha were soliders, and so was Tolstoy. Only they saw deeper and truer into their profession, and found the secret of a true, happy, honourable, and godly life. Let us be joint sharers with these teachers, and this land of ours will once more be the abode of Gods.—(*Modern Review*).



## CIVIC FREEDOM

*This is an incident that happened when Mr. Gandhi went to England years ago :—*

A gentleman on board said, " I see you are going to London in order to get rid of the day's collar!" Precisely; it was because they did not want to wear a dog's collar that they had put up that fight. They were willing to sacrifice everything for sentiment, but it was a noble sentiment. It was a sentiment that had to be cherished as a religious sentiment. It was a sentiment that bound people together; it was a sentiment that bound creatures to the Creator. That was the sentiment for which he asked them, advised them, if necessary, to die. Their action would be reflected throughout the British Dominions, through the length and breadth of India, and they were now upon their trial. There was no better and no fear for a man who believed in God. No matter what might be said, he would always repeat that it was a struggle for religious liberty. By religion they did not mean formal religion, or customary religion, but that religion which underlay all religions, which brought them face to face with their *Maker*. If they ceased to be men; if, on taking a deliberate vow, they

broke that vow in order that they might remain in the Transvaal without physical inconvenience, they undoubtedly forsook their God. To repeat again the words of the Jew of Nazareth, those who would follow God had to leave the world, and he had called upon his countrymen, in that particular instance, to leave the world and cling to God, as a child would cling to the mother's breast.

Their natural deaths they could die far outside the Transvaal, wherever there was a piece of earth given them, but if they would die a noble death, a man's death, there was only one course open to them. . . . The handful of Indians who had a right to remain in the Transvaal should be allowed to remain as worthy citizens of a mighty Empire, but should not remain as beasts so long as he could help it.

## WOMEN AND PASSIVE RESISTANCE.

*Conversation between Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi :—*

The ladies were allowed to join the struggle after great effort was made by them to take part in it. When Mrs. Gandhi understood the marriage difficulty, she was incensed and said to Mr. Gandhi : "Then I am not your wife, according to the laws of this country." Mr. Gandhi replied that that was so and added that their children were not theirs. "Then" she said "let us go to India." Mr. Gandhi replied that that would be cowardly and that it would not solve the difficulty. "Could I not, then, join the struggle and be imprisoned myself?" Mr Gandhi told her she could but that it was not a small matter. Her health was not good, she had not known that type of hardship and it would be disgraceful if after her joining the struggle, she weakened. But Mrs. Gandhi was not to be moved. The other ladies, so closely related and living on the Settlement, would not be gainsaid. They insisted that, apart from their own convictions, just as strong as Mrs. Gandhi's, they could not possibly remain out and allow Mrs. Gandhi to go to gaol. The proposal caused the gravest anxiety. The step was momentous.

### *Women and Passive Resistance.*

If the decision was based on the impulse of the moment, they and those who allowed them to join might have to rue the day that it was made and accepted. Then how could they ensure being arrested without making a fuss? They wanted to avoid all publicity till they were safely in gaol. Then there was the risk of the Government leaving them alone as being harmless maniacs and fanatics. If, at the last moment, they flinched, their prominence might seriously damage the cause they sought to advance. All these and several other considerations suggested that the best course would be to deliberately and openly decline to disclose their identity on courting arrest. And if the move failed even then, they were to proceed to Johannesburg and take up hawking without licences and compel arrest. Any hardship was light enough compared to that of having to bear the insult to them or their sisters of not being considered lawful wives of their husbands.

## DEFINITION OF HOME RULE.

In describing Home Rule as the right to err and to rectify that error ourselves, Mr. Gandhi has it seems to us, gone to the very root of this question. It summarily dismisses all the nonsense to which we are constantly treated by our opponents, regarding our fitness or unfitness to control and manage our own affairs. Great Britain has enjoyed Home Rule or Self-Government for nearly a thousand years now. But her rulers have never been infallible. Her kings committed mistakes and paid the penalty for their mistakes sometimes by loss of power, sometimes by loss of throne, and, once at least, by loss of his head. But history knows it now that British freedom has advanced through these very errors. When then supreme control of affairs was gradually transferred to the people, even then the leaders of British politics were not infallible men; nor did the great British Democracy give an intelligent vote upon vital public questions, while returning their representatives to Parliament. British constituencies frequently committed serious mistakes and their representatives in Parliament also frequently followed short-sighted policies, creating needless complications in public

### *Definition of Home Rule.*

affairs. But the same constituencies and the same representatives gathered greater freedom from these very mistakes, and by rectifying them themselves, won new strength of purpose and determination in the pursuit of the common weal. Evolution is always experimental. All progress is gained through mistakes and their rectification. No good comes fully fashioned, out of God's hand, but has to be carved out through repeated experiments and repeated failures by ourselves. This is the law of individual growth. The same law controls social, and political evolution also. The right to err, which means the freedom to try experiments, is the universal condition of all progress. And as Mr. Gandhi truly says, in demanding Home Rule for India we are only claiming this fundamental right for country and our people. We want to beat our destiny out ourselves. That is all.—  
*Patrika.*

## REPLY TO MR. IRWIN

*[The following is the letter from Mr. M. K. Gandhi dated Motihari, January 16, (1918) and addressed to "The Statesman" of Calcutta.]*

Sir,—Mr. Irwin's latest letter published in your issue of the 12th instant compels me to court the hospitality of your columns. So long as your correspondent confined himself to matters directly affecting himself, his misrepresentations did not much matter, as the real facts were is much within the knowledge of the Government and those who are concerned with the agrarian question in Champaran, as within mine. But in the letter under notice, he has travelled outside his jurisdiction as it were, and unchivalrously attacked one of the most innocent woman walking on the face of the earth (and this I say although she happens to be my wife) and has unpardonably referred to a question of the greatest moment, I mean, the cow-protection question, without taking the precaution as behoves a gentleman of ascertaining facts at first hand.

My address to the "Gau-rakshini Sabha" he could have easily obtained upon application to me. This at least was due to me as between man and man. Your.

### *Reply to Mr. Irwin.*

correspondent accuses me of "making a united attack on *Sahablu* (their landlords) who slaughter and eat cows daily." This pre-supposes that I was addressing a comparatively microscopic audience of the planters raiyats. The fact is that the audience was composed chiefly of the non-raiyat class. But I had in mind a much bigger audience, and not merely the few thousand hearers before me. I spoke under a full sense of my responsibility. The question of cow-protection is, in my opinion as large as the Empire to which Mr. Irwin and I belong. I know that he is the proud father of a young lad of 24, who has received by his gallantry the unique honour of a colonelcy at this age. Mr. Irwin can, if he will, obtain a greater honour for himself by studying the cow question and taking his full share in its solution. He will I promise, be then much better occupied, than when he is dashing off his misrepresentations to be published in the Press and most unnecessarily preparing to bring 2,200 cases against his tenants for the sake of deriving the questionable pleasure of deeming me responsible for those cases.

### MISSION OF A LIFE

I said at the meeting that the Hindus had no warrant for resenting the slaughter of cows by their Mahomedan brethren who kill them from religious conviction, so long as they themselves were a party to the killing by inches of thousands of cattle who were horribly ill-treated by their Hindu owners, to the drinking of milk drawn from cows in the inhuman dairies of



Calcutta, and so long as they calmly contemplated the slaughter of thousands of cattle in the slaughter houses of India for providing beef for the European and Christian residents of India. I suggested that the first step towards procuring full protection for cows was to put their own house in order by securing absolute immunity from illtreatment of their cattle by Hindus themselves, and then to appeal to the Europeans to abstain from beef-eating whilst resident in India, or at least to procure beef from outside India. I added that in no case could the cow-protection propaganda, if it was to be based upon religious conviction, tolerate a sacrifice of Mohamedans for the sake of saving cows, that the religious method of securing protection from Christians and Mohamedans alike was for Hindus to offer themselves a willing sacrifice of sufficient magnitude to draw out the merciful nature of Christians and Mohamedans. Rightly or wrongly, worship of the cow is ingrained in the Hindu nature and I see no escape from a most bigoted and sanguinary strife over this question between Christians and Mohamedans on the one hand and Hindus on the other except in the fullest recognition and practice by the Hindus of the religion of *Ahimsa*, which it is my self-imposed and humble mission in life to preach. Let the truth be faced. It must not be supposed that Hindus feel nothing about the cow-slaughter going on for the European. I know that their wrath is to-day being buried under the awe inspired by the English rule. But there is not a Hindu throughout

*Reply to Mr. Irwin.*

the length and breadth of India who does not expect one day to free his land from cow-slaughter. But contrary to the genius of Hinduism as I know it would not mind forcing even at the point of the sword either the Christian or the Mohamedan to abandon cow-slaughter. I wish to play my humble part in preventing such a catastrophe and I thank Mr. Irwin for having provided me with an opportunity of inviting him and your readers to help me in my onerous mission. The mission may fail to prevent cow-slaughter. But there is no reason why by patient plodding and consistent practice it should not succeed in showing the folly, the stupidity and the inhumanity of committing the crime of killing a fellow human being for the sake of saving a fellow animal.

So much on behalf of the innocent cow. A word only for my innocent wife who will never even know the wrong your correspondent has done her. If Mr. Irwin would enjoy the honour of being introduced to her he will soon find out that Mrs. Gandhi is a simple woman, almost unlettered, who knows nothing of the two bazaars mentioned by him, even as I knew nothing of them until very recently and some time after the establishment of the rival bazaar referred to by Mr. Irwin. He will then further assure himself that Mrs. Gandhi has had no hand in its establishment and is totally incapable of managing such a bazaar. Lastly he will at once learn that Mrs. Gandhi's time is occupied in cooking for and serving the teachers conducting the school established in the *dehat*

*Mahatma Gandhi.*

in question, in distributing medical relief and in moving amongst the women of the *dehat* with a view to giving them an idea of simple hygiene. Mrs. Gandhi, I may add, has not learnt the art of making speeches or addressing letters to the Press.

As to the rest of the letter, the less said the better. It is so full of palpable misrepresentations that it is difficult to deal with them with sufficient self-restraint. I can only say that I am trying to the best of my ability to fulfil the obligation, I hold myself under, of promoting good-will between planters and the raiyats, and if I fail it would not be due to want of effort on my part, but it would be largely, if not entirely, due to the mischievous propaganda Mr. Irwin is carrying on openly and some others *sub rosa* in Champaran in order to nullify the effect of the report published by the Agrarian Committee, which was brought into being not as Mr. Irwin falsely suggests at my request, but by the agitation carried on, as your files would demonstrate by Mr. Irwin and his friends of the Anglo-Indian Association. If he is wise he will abide by his written word, voluntarily and after full discussion and deliberation given by him at Ranchi.

## A HUMANITARIAN MEETING

*[A public meeting under the auspices of the Bengal and Bombay Humanitarian Funds was held in October, 1917, at the University Institute, College square, when Mr. M. K. Gandhi presided. There was a good gathering and the name of Mr. Gandhi was sufficient to attract a pretty large audience. Babu Nilamanda Mukherjee, M.A., B.L. in a neat little speech proposed Mr. Gandhi to the chair. Mr. Gandhi in opening the meeting asked the audience whether he should speak in English or Hindi and there having been a preponderance of opinion on the side of English, he spoke in English] :—*

Mr. Gandhi regretted that there should be a lack of the understanding and knowledge of Hindi by Indians. All were eager, he said, to do national service, but there could be no National service without a National tongue. He regretted that his Bengalee friends were committing National suicide by omitting to use their National tongue, without which one cannot reach the hearts of the masses. In that sense the wide use of Hindi would come within the purview of humanitarianism. Mr. Gandhi next passed to another phase of humanitarianism *viz.*, sacrifice of animals before Goddesses, and

slaughter for food. The Hindu Shastras do not really advocate animal sacrifice. This current practice is one of the many things which have passed under the name of Hinduism. The Hindu religion aptly finds expression in the two aphorisms—"harmlessness is the best form of religion" and "there is no force higher than Truth," and these principles are incompatible with the cruel practice of animal sacrifice.

## ALL-INDIA SOCIAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

*[On Monday, 31st December, 1917, at 3 p.m. the All-India Social Service Conference was held at the Y.M.C.A. Hall College Street, Calcutta. A large number of ladies and gentlemen were present. Sir Krishna Gobinda Gupta in the absence of the Lord Bishop of Calcutta, who was unavoidably absent proposed that Mr. Gandhi should take the chair and in doing so said that Mr. Gandhi lived with the South Africans and suffered with them and he had done so much in Champaran lately and which would be followed in other parts. Mr. Gandhi in taking the chair, spoke as follows] :—*

If I want to hear music, I must come to Bengal. If I want to listen poetry, I must come to Bengal, India is contained in Bengal, but not Bengal in India. I heard some Marvari boys singing songs. It was like jargon. I told them to associate with the Bengalis.

He then delivered the following presidential address.

### PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

FRIENDS,—I thank you for the honour you have conferred upon me. I was totally unprepared for the invitation to preside over the deliberations of this

assembly. I do not know that I am fitted for the task. Having fixed views about the use of Hindi at national gatherings, I am always disinclined to speak in English. And I felt that the time was not ripe for me to ask to be allowed to deliver the presidential speech in Hindi. Moreover, I have not much faith in conferences. Social Service to be effective has to be rendered without noise. It is best performed when the left hand knoweth not what the right is doing. Sir Gibbie's work told because nobody knew it. He could not be spoiled by praise or held back by blame. Would that our service were of this nature. Holding such views, it was not without considerable hesitation and misgivings that I obeyed the summons of the Reception Committee. You will, therefore, pardon me if you find in me a candid critic rather than an enthusiast carrying the conference to its goal with confidence and assurance.

It seems to me then that I cannot do better than draw attention to some branches of Social Service which we have hitherto more or less ignored.

The greatest service we can render to society is to free ourselves and it from the superstitious regard we have learnt to pay to the learning of the English language. It is the medium of instruction in our schools and colleges. It is becoming the 'lingua franca' of the country. Our best thoughts are expressed in it. Lord Chelmsford hopes that it will soon take the place of the mother tongue in high families. This belief in the necessity of English training has enslaved us. - It has

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unfitted us for true national service. Were it not for force of habit, we could not fail to see that by reason of English being the medium of instruction, our intellect has been segregated we have been isolated from the masses, the best mind of the nation has become caged and the masses have not received the benefit of the new ideas we have received. We have been engaged these past sixty years in memorising strange words and their pronunciation instead of assimilating facts. In the place of building upon the foundation, training received from our parents, we have almost unlearnt it. There is no parallel to this in History. It is a national tragedy. The first and the greatest Social Service we can render is to revert to our vernaculars to restore Hindi to its natural place as the national language and begin carrying on all our provincial proceedings in our respective vernaculars and national proceedings in Hindi. We ought not to rest till our schools and colleges give us instruction through the vernaculars. It ought not to be necessary even for the sake of our English friends to have to speak in English. Every English civil and military officer learns it because they need it for their business. The day must soon come when our legislatures will debate national affairs in the vernaculars or Hindi as the case may be. Hitherto the masses have been strangers to their proceedings. The vernacular papers have tried to undo the mischief a little. But the task was beyond them. The "Patrika" reserves its biting sarcasm, the "Bengalee" its learning for ears turned to English. In this ancient land of



cultured thinkers the presence in our midst of a Tagore or a Bose or a Roy ought not to excite wonder. Yet the painful fact is that there are so few of them. You will forgive me if I have tarried too long on a subject which in your opinion may hardly be treated as an item of Social Service. I have however taken the liberty of mentioning the matter prominently as it is my conviction that all national activity suffers materially owing to this radical defect in our system of education.

Coming to more familiar items of Social Service, the list is appalling. I shall select only those of which I have any knowledge.

Work in times of sporadic distress such as famine and floods is no doubt necessary and most praiseworthy. But it produces no permanent results. There are fields of Social Service in which there may be no renown but which may yield lasting results.

In 1914, cholera, fevers and plague together claimed 4,639,663 victims. If so many had died fighting on the battle-field during the war that is at present devastating Europe we would have covered ourselves with glory and lovers of Swaraj would need no further argument in support of their cause. As it is 4,639,663 have died a lingering death unmourned and their dying has brought us nothing but discredit. A distinguished Englishman said the other day that Englishman did all the thinking for us whilst we sat supine. He added that most Englishmen basing their opinions on their English experience presented impossible or costly remedies for the evils they

investigated. There is much truth in the above statement. In other countries reformers have successfully grappled with epidemics. Here Englishmen have tried and failed. They have thought along western lines ignoring the vast differences, climatic and other, between Europe and India. Our doctors and physicians have practically done nothing. I am sure that half a dozen medical men of the front rank dedicating their lives to the work of eradicating the tripple curse would succeed where Englishmen have failed. I venture to suggest that the way lies not through finding out cures but through finding or rather applying preventive methods. I prefer to use the participle 'applying' for I have it on the aforementioned authority that to drive out plague (and I add cholera and malaria) is absurdly simple. There is no conflict of opinion as to the preventive methods. We simply do not apply them. We have made up our minds that the masses will not adopt them. There could be no greater calumny uttered against them. If we would but stoop to conquer they can be easily conquered. The truth is that we expect the Government to do the work. In my opinion in this matter, the Government cannot lead, they can follow and help if we could lead. Here then, there is work enough for our doctors and an army of workers to help them. I note that you in Bengal are working some what in this direction. I may state that a small but earnest band of volunteers are at the present moment engaged in doing such work in Champaran. They are posted in different villages. There

they teach the village children, they give medical aid to the sick and they give practical lessons in hygiene to the village folk by cleaning their wells and roads and showing them how to treat human excreta. Nothing can yet be predicted as to results as the experiments is in its infancy. This Conference may usefully appoint a committee of doctors who would study rural conditions on the spot and draw up a course of instructions for the guidance of workers and of the people at large.

Nothing perhaps affords such splendid facility to every worker, wholetime or otherwise, for effective service as the relief of agony through which the 3rd class railway passengers are passing. I feel keenly about this grievance not because I am in it but I have gone to it as I have felt keenly about it. This matter affects millions of our poor and middle class countrymen. This helpless toleration of every inconvenience and insult is visibly deteriorating the nation even as the cruel treatment to which we have subjected the so-called depressed classes has made them indifferent to the laws of personal cleanliness and the very idea of self-respect. What else but down-right degradation can await those who have to make a scramble always like mad animals for seats in a miserable compartment, who have to swear and curse before they can speak through the window in order to get standing room, who have to wallow in dirt during their journey, who are served their food like dogs and eat it like them, who have ever to bend before those who are physically stronger than they and who being packed like sardines

in compartments have to get such sleep as they can in a sitting posture for nights together. Railway servants swear at them, cheat them. On the Howrah Lahore service our friends from Kabul fill to the brim the cup of the misery of the 3rd class travellers. They become lords of the compartments they enter. It is not possible for any one to resist them. They swear at you on the slightest pretext, exhaust the whole of the obscene vocabulary of the Hindi language. They do not hesitate to belabour you if you retort or in any way oppose them. They usurp the best seats and insist on stretching themselves full length even in crowded compartments. No compartment is deemed too crowded for them to enter. The travellers patiently bear all their awful impertinence out of sheer helplessness. They would, if they could knock down the man who dared to swear at them as do these Kabulis. But they are physically no match for the Kabulis and every Kabuli considers, himself more than a match for any number of travellers from the plains. This is not right. The effect of this terrorising on the national character cannot but be debasing. We, the educated few ought to deliver the travelling public from this scourge or for ever renounce our claim to speak on its behalf or to guide it. I believe the Kabulis to be amenable to reason. They are a God-fearing people. If you know their language, you can successfully appeal to their good sense. But they are spoilt children of nature. Cowards among us have used their undoubted physical strength for our nefarious purposes. And they have now come to

think that they can treat poor people as they choose and consider themselves above the law of the land. Here is work enough for Social Service Volunteers for this class of work can board trains and educate the people to a sense of their duty, call in guards and other officials in order to remove over crowding see that passengers leave and board trains without a scramble. It is clear that until the Kabulis can be patiently taught to behave themselves, they ought to have a compartment all to themselves and they ought not to be permitted to enter any other compartment. With the exception of providing additional plant, every one of the other evil attendant on railway travelling ought to be immediately redressed. It is no answer that we have suffered the wrong so long. Prescriptive rights can not accrue to wrongs.

No less important is the problem of the depressed classes. To lift them from the position to which Hindu society has reduced them is to remove a big blot on Hinduism. The present treatment of these classes is a sin against religion and humanity.

But the work requires service of the highest order. We shall make little headway by merely throwing schools at them. We must change the attitude of the masses and orthodoxy. I have already shown that we have cut ourselves adrift from both. We do not react on them. We can do so only if we speak to them in their own language. An anglicised India cannot speak to them with effect. If we believe in Hinduism we must approach them in the hindu fashion. We must do

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'tapsya' and keep our Hinduism undefiled. Pure and enlightened orthodoxy must be matched against superstitious and ignorant orthodoxy. To restore to their proper status a fifth of our total population is a task worthy of any Social Service organisation.

The bustees of Calcutta and the chawls of Bombay badly demand the devoted services of hundreds of social workers. They send our infants to an early grave and promote vice, degradation and filth.

Apart from the fundamental evil arising out of our defective system of education I have hitherto dealt with evils calling for service among the masses. The classes perhaps demand no less attention than the masses. It is my opinion that all evils like diseases are symptoms of the same evil or disease. They appear various by being refracted through different media. The root evil is loss of true spirituality brought about through causes I cannot examine from this platform. We have lost the robust faith of our forefathers in the absolute efficacy of 'Satya' (truth) 'Ahimsa' (love) and 'Brahmacharya' (Self restraint). We certainly believe in them to an extent. They are the best policy but we may deviate from them if our untrained reason suggests deviation. We have not faith enough to feel that though the present outlook seems black, if we follow the dictates of truth and exercise self restraint, the ultimate result must be sound. Men whose spiritual vision has become blurred mostly look to the present rather than conserve the future good. He will render the greatest social service who will reins-

tate us in our ancient spirituality. But humble men that we are, it is enough for us if we recognise the loss and by such ways as are open to us prepare the way for the man who will infect us with his power and enable us to feel clearly through the heart, things we are to-day unable to perceive through our reason.

Looking then at the classes I find that our Rajahs and Maharajahs squander their resources after the so called useless sport and drink. I was told the other day that the cocaine habit was sapping the nation's manhood and that like the drink habit it was on the increase and in its effect more deadly than drink. It is impossible for a social worker to blind himself to the evil. We dare not ape the West. We are a nation that has lost its prestige and its self-respect. Whilst a tenth of our population is living on the verge of starvation, we have no time for indulging ourselves. What the West may do with impunity is likely in our case to prove our ruin. The evils that are corroding the higher strata of society are difficult for an ordinary worker to tackle. They have acquired a certain degree of respectability. But they ought not to be beyond the reach of this Conference.

Equally important is the question of the status of women both Hindu and Mahomedan. Are they or are they not to play their full part in the plan of regeneration alongside of their husband? They must be enfranchised. They can no longer be treated either as dolls or slaves without the social body remaining in a condition of

social paralysis. And here again I would venture to suggest to the reformer that the way to woman's freedom is not through education but through the change of attitude on the part of men and corresponding action. Education is necessary but it must follow the freedom. We dare not wait for literary education to restore our womanhood to its proper state. Even without literary education our women are as cultured as any on the face of the earth. The remedy largely lies in the hands of husbands.

It makes my blood boil as I wander through the country and watch lifeless and fleshless oxen with their ribs sticking through their skins, carrying loads or ploughing our fields. To improve the breed of our cattle, to rescue them from the cruelty practised on them by their cow worshipping masters and to save them from the slaughter house is to solve half the problem of our poverty . . . We have to educate the people to a humane use of their cattle and plead with the Government to conserve the pasture land of the country. Protection of the cow is an economic necessity. It cannot be brought about by force. It can only be achieved by an appeal to the finer feelings of our English friends and our Mahomedan countrymen to save the cow from the slaughter house. This question involves the overhauling of the management of our Pinjrapoles and cow protection societies. A proper solution of this very difficult problem means establishment of perfect concord between Hindus and



Mahomedans and an end of Bakrid riots.

I have glanced at the literature kindly furnished at my request by the several Leagues who are rendering admirable Social Service. I note that some have included in their programme many of the items mentioned by me. All the Leagues are non-sectarian and they have as their members the most distinguished men and women in the land. The possibilities for services of a far reaching character are therefore great. But if the work is to leave its impress on the nation, we must have workers who are prepared, in Mr. Gokhale's words,—to dedicate their lives to the cause. Give me such workers and I promise they will rid the land of all the evils that afflict it.

## KAIRA DISTRESS

### THE REMEDY

*An influential and largely attended meeting of Bombay merchants and traders was held (February 1918) at the Moolji Jetha Market under the presidency of Mr. Jammadas Dwarkadas, when Mr. M. K. Gandhi who had specially come to Bombay, explained to the audience the situation in the Kaira district. Mr. Gandhi, in a brief but lucid speech narrated the whole story with the fervour and conviction so characteristic of him.*

### SABHA JUSTIFIED

*Mr. Gandhi on rising to speak was greeted with loud cheers from all sides. He said :—*

I do not want to say much. I have received a letter asking me to be present at to-morrow's deputation that is going to wait on his Excellency the Governor, and I am sure I will be able to explain to him the true facts. Still I must make it clear here that the responsibility of the notice issued by the Gujarat Sabha lies on me. I was at Ahmedabad before that notice was issued, where the matter of Kaira district was being discussed, when it

was decided that the Gujarat Sabha ought to take part in the matter. I think that as regards this notice, a mountain has been made out of a mole-hill. Every one knew what the notice was when it was being framed, Nobody then even dreamt that Government would misinterpret it. The Sabha had with it sufficient data about the plight of the people. They came to know that Government officials were collecting taxes and the people were even selling their cattle to pay the taxes. The matter had come to such a pass, and, knowing this, the Sabha thought it better to issue a notice to console the people who braved these hardship. And the notice was the result of that information, and I have every hope that in the deputation that is going to wait on the Governor, the result of the deliberations will end in the success of the people.

#### COMMISSIONER'S WRATH

If the Commissioner had not been angry with us, and had talked politely with the deputation that waited on him, and had not misinstructed the Bombay Government, such a grave crisis would not have eventuated, and we would not have had the trouble of meeting here this evening. The Sabha's request was to suspend the collection of dues till the negotiations were over. But Government did not take this proper course and issued an angry Press Note. It was my firm belief—and even now I firmly believe—that the representatives of the people and Government could have joined together and taken the proper steps. I regret to

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have to say that Government has made a mistake. Perhaps subordinate officers of Government would say to Government that the notice was issued not from a pure motive, but from some other ulterior motive. If Government are impressed with this erroneous belief, those who have stood by the people, I hope, will continue to stand by them to the end and will not retreat. Any responsible right-thinking man could have given them the same advice. People possess the same rights as the authorities have, and public men have every right to advise the people of their rights. The people that do not fight for their rights are like slaves (hear, hear), and such people do not deserve Home Rule. When authorities think that they can take anything from the people and can interfere, a difficult situation arises. And if such a situation arises, I must plainly say that those who have given the people the right advice, will stand by them till the end.

### TWO WEAPONS

I have not yet come to any conclusion, and I sincerely trust that those who understand the responsibility, will not hesitate to undergo hardships in order to secure justice. (Applause). And in such an eventuality I hope you will not beat an ignominious retreat. The first and the last principle of passive resistance is that we should not inflict hardships on others, but put up with them ourselves in order to get justice, and Government need not fear anything if we make up our mind, as we are bent on getting sheer justice from it and nothing else.

*Mahatma Gandhi.*

To get that justice we must fight with the authorities and the people that do not so fight are but slaves. We can have only two weapons on occasions like this : Revolt or passive resistance, and my request is for the second remedy always. The right of suffering hardships, and claiming justice and getting our demands is from one's birth. Similarly we have to get justice at the hands of Government by suffering hardships. We must suffer hardships like brave men. What I have to say is, resort to the right means, and that very firmly, in order to remove the distress through which the Gujarat people are passing. It is my conviction that if we tell the truth to the British Government it can ultimately be convinced. and if only we are firm in our resolve, rest assured that Kaira people shall suffer wrongs no more. (Loud cheers).

## GANDHI'S FAST

[*Mr. M. K. Gandhi writes from Nadiad, under date March 27, 1918*] :—

Perhaps I owe an explanation to the public with regard to my recent fast. Some friends consider the action to have been silly, others, cowardly and some others still worse. In my opinion I would have been untrue to my Maker and to the cause I was espousing if I had acted otherwise.

When over a month ago I reached Bombay I was told that Ahmedabad millhands had threatened a strike and violence if the bonus that was given to them during the plague was withdrawn. I was asked to intervene and I consented.

Owing to the plague the men were getting as much as 70 per cent. bonus since August last. An attempt to recall that bonus had resulted in grave dissatisfaction among the labourers. When it was almost too late the millowners offered in the place of the plague bonus and for the sake of the high princes a rise of 20 per cent. The labourers were unsatisfied. The matter was referred to arbitration, Mr. Chatfield, the Collector being the Umpire. The men in some mills however struck work. The owners

thinking that they had done so without just cause withdrew from the arbitration and declared a general lockout to be continued till the labourers were exhausted into accepting 20 per cent. increase they had offered. Messrs. Shankerlal, Banker, V. J. Patal and I, the arbitrators appointed on behalf of the labourers, thought that they were to be demoralised if we did not act promptly and decisively. We therefore investigated the question of increase, we sought the millowners' assistance. They would not give it. Their one purpose was to organise themselves into a combination that could fight a similar combination of their employees. One-sided technically though our investigation was, we endeavoured to examine the millowners' side, and came to the conclusion that 35 per cent increase was fair. Before announcing the figure to the mill-hands we informed the employers of the result of our inquiry and told them that we would correct ourselves if they could show any error. The latter would not co-operate. They sent a reply saying as much, but they pointed out in it that the rate of increase granted by the Government as also the employers in Bombay, was much less than the one contemplated by us. I felt that the addendum was beside the point and at a huge meeting announced 35 per cent. for the mill-hands' acceptance. Be it noted that the plague bonus amounted to 70 per cent. of their wages and they had declared their intention of accepting not less than 50 per cent. as high prices increase. They were now called upon to accept the mean, finding the mean was quite an

### *Gandhi's Fast.*

accident between the millowners' 20 per cent. and their own 50 per cent. After some grumbling the meeting accepted the 35 per cent. increase, it always being understood that they would recognise at the same time the principle of arbitration whenever the millowners did so. From that time forward, *i. e.*, day after day thousands of people gathered together under the shade of a tree outside the city walls, people walking long distances in many cases and solemnly repeated their determination in the name of God not to accept anything less than 35 per cent. No pecuniary assistance was given them. It is easy enough to understand that many must suffer from the pangs of starvation and that they could not while they were without employment get any credit. We who were helping them, came, on the other hand to the conclusion that we would only spoil them if we collected public funds and utilised them for feeding them unless the able bodied amongst them were ready to perform breadlabour. It was a difficult task to persuade men who had worked at machines to shoulder baskets of sand or bricks. They came but they did so grudgingly. The millowners hardened their hearts. They were equally determined not to go beyond 20 per cent. and they appointed emissaries to persuade the men to give in. Even during the early part of the lockout, whilst we had declined to help those who would not work we had assured them that we would feed and clothe ourselves after feeding and clothing them. Twenty-two days had passed by hunger and the millowners' emissaries were producing



their effect and Satan was whispering to the men that there was no such thing as God on earth who would help them and that vows were dodges resorted to by weaklings. One morning instead of an eager and enthusiastic crowd of 5 to 10 thousand men with determination written on their faces, I met a body of about 2000 men with despair written on their faces. We had just heard that millhands living in a particular chawl had declined to attend the meeting, were preparing to go to work and accept 20 per cent. increase and were taunting us (I think very properly) that it was very well for us who had motors at our disposal and plenty of food, to attend their meetings and advise staunchness even unto death. What was I to do? I held the cause to be just. I believe in God as I believe that I am writing this letter. I believe in the necessity of the performance of "one's promises" at all costs. I knew that the men before us were God-fearing men, but that the long-drawn out lockout or strike was putting an undue strain upon them. I had the knowledge before me that during my extensive travels in India hundreds of people were found who as readily broke their promises as they made them. I know, too, that the best of us have but a vague and indistinct belief in soul-force and in God. I felt that it was a sacred moment for me, my faith was on the anvil, and I had no hesitation in rising and declaring to the men that a breach of their vow so solemnly taken was unendurable by me and that I would not take any food until they had the 35 per cent increase given or until they had fallen.

A meeting that was up to now unlike the former meetings totally unresponsive, worked up as if by magic. Tears trickled down the cheeks of every one of them and men after men rose up saying that they would never go to the mills unless they got the increase and that they would go about the city and steel the hearts of those who had not attended the meeting. It was a privilege to witness the demonstration of the efficacy of truth and love. Every one immediately realised that the protecting power of God was as much with us to-day as it used to be in the days of yore. I am not sorry for the vow, but with belief that I have, I would have been unworthy of the trust undertaken by me if I had done anything less. Before I took the vow I knew that there were serious defects about it. For me to take such a vow in order to affect in any shape or form the decision of the millowners would be a cowardly injustice done to them and that I would prove myself unfit for the friendship which I had the privilege of enjoying with some of them. I knew that I ran the risk of being misunderstood. I could not prevent my fast from affecting my decision. Their knowledge moreover put a responsibility on me which I was ill able to bear. From now I disabled myself from gaining concessions for the men which ordinarily in a struggle such as this I would be entirely justified in securing. I knew, too, that I would have to be satisfied with the minimum I could get from the millowners and with a fulfilment of the letter of the men's vow rather than its spirit and so hath it happened. I put the defects

of my vow in one scale and the merits of it in the other. There are hardly any acts of human beings which are free from all taint. Mine, I know, was exceptionally tainted but the ignominy of having unworthily compromised by my vow the position and independence of the millowners, than that it should be said by posterity that 10,000 men had suddenly broken a vow which they had for over twenty days solemnly taken and repeated in the name of God. I am fully convinced that no body of men can make themselves into a nation or perform great tasks unless they become as true as steel and unless their promises come to be regarded by the world like the law of the Medes and Persians, inflexible, and unbreakable, and whatever may be the verdict of friends, so far as I can think at present, on given occasions I should not hesitate in future to repeat the humble performance which I have taken the liberty of describing in this communication.

I cannot conclude this letter without mentioning two names of whom India has every reason to be proud. The millowners were represented by Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai who is a gentleman in every sense of the term. He is a man of great culture and equally great abilities. He adds to these qualities a resolute will. The millhands were represented by his sister Anasuyaben. She possesses a heart of gold. She is full of pity for the poor. The mill hands adore her. Her word is law with them. I have not known a struggle fought with so little bitterness and such courtesy on either side. This

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happy result is principally due to the connections with it of Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai and Anasuyaben.

## THE KAIRA DISTRESS

*Mr. M. K. Gandhi writes from Nadiya under date 28th March, 1918:—*

In the District of Kaira the crops for the year 1917-18 have, by common admission proved a partial failure. Under the Revenue Rules if the crops are under four annas the cultivators are entitled to full suspension of the Revenue assessment for the year; if the crops are under six annas, half the amount of assessment is suspended. So far as I am aware, the Government have been pleased to grant full suspension with regard to one village out of nearly 600, and half-suspension in the case of over 103 villages. It is claimed on behalf of the ryots that the suspension is not at all adequate to the actuality. The Government contend that in the vast majority of villages crops have been over six annas. The only question, therefore, at issue is, whether the crops have under four annas or six annas, as the case may be or over the latter figure. Government valuation is in the first instance made by the Talatis assisted by the chief-men of the villages concerned. As a rule no check on their figures is considered necessary; for it is only during partial failure of crops that Government

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valuation of crops may have to be challenged. The Talatis are as a class obsequious, unscrupulous and tyrannical. The chief men are especially selected for their docility. The Talati's one aim is naturally to collect full assessment as promptly as possible. One sometimes reads account of assiduous Talatis having been awarded 'pugrees' for making full collection. In applying to the Talatis the adjectives I have, I wish to cast no reflection on them as men, I merely state the fact. The Talatis are not born; they are made; and rent-collectors all the world over have to cultivate a callousness without which they could not do their work to the satisfaction of their masters. It is impossible for me to reproduce the graphic description given by the Ryots of the recent collectors which the Talatis chiefly are. My purpose in dealing with the Talatis is to show that the Government's valuation of the crops is derived in the first instance from the tainted source and is presumably biased against the Ryots. As against their valuation we have the universal testimony of Ryots, high and low, some of whom are men of position and considerable wealth who have a reputation to lose and who have nothing to gain by exaggerations except the odium of Talatis and possibly higher officials. I wish to state at once that behind this movement there is no desire to discredit the Government, or an individual official. The movement is intended to assert the right of the people to be effectively heard in matters concerning themselves.

It is known to the public that the Hon'ble Mr. G.K. Parekh and Mr. V. J. Patel invited and assisted by the Gujarat Sabha carried on investigations, as also Messrs. Deodhar, Joshi and Thakkar of the Servants of India Society. Their investigation was necessarily preliminary and brief and therefore confined to a few villages only. But the result of their enquiry went to show that the crops in the majority of cases was under four annas. As their investigation, not being extensive enough, was capable, of being challenged as it was challenged. I undertook a full inquiry with the assistance of over 20 capable, experienced, and impartial men of influence and status. I personally visited over 30 villages and met as many men in the villages as I could, inspected in these villages most of the fields belonging to them and after a searching cross-examination of the villagers, came to the conclusion that their crops were under four annas. I found that among the men who surrounded me, there were present those who were ready to check exaggerations and wild statements. Men knew what was at stake if they departed from the truth. As to the 'Rabi' crops and the still standing 'Kharif' crops I was able by the evidence of my own eyes to check the statements of the agriculturists. The methods adopted by my co-workers were exactly the same. In this manner nearly four hundred villagers were examined, and with but a few exceptions, crops were found to be under four annas, and only in three cases they were found to be over six annas. The method adopted by us was, so far as the 'Kharif'

crops were concerned, to ascertain the actual yield of the whole of the crops of individual villages, and the possible yield of the same village in a normal year. Assuming the truth of the statements made by them, this is admittedly an absolute test, and any other method that would not bring about the same result must be rejected as untrue and unscientific; and as I have already remarked all probability of exaggeration was avoided in the above-named investigation. As to the standing 'Rabi' crops there was the eye estimate and it was tested by the method above mentioned. The Government method is an eye estimate and therefore a matter largely of guess work. It is moreover open to fundamental objections which I have endeavoured to set forth in a letter to the Collector of the District. I requested him to treat Vadthal—a well-known and ordinarily well-to-do village of the District with the railway line passing by it and which is near a trade centre—as a test case and I suggested that if the crops were in that village proved to be under four annas, as I hold they were, it might be assumed that in the other villages less fortunately situated, crops were not likely to be more than four annas. I had added to my request a suggestion that I should be permitted to be present at the inquiry. He made the inquiry, but rejected my suggestion, and therefore it proved to be one-sided. The Collector has made an elaborate report on the crops of that village, which in my opinion I have successfully challenged. The original Government valuation, I understand, was twelve annas,



the Collector's minimum valuation is seven annas. If the palpably wrong methods of valuation to which I have drawn attention and which have been adopted by the Collector, are allowed for, the valuation according to his own reckoning would come under six annas and according to the agriculturists it would be under four annas. Both the report and my answer are too technical to be of value to the public. But I have suggested that as both the Government and agriculturists hold themselves in the right if the Government have any regard for popular opinion, they should appoint an impartial committee of enquiry with the cultivators' representatives upon it, or gracefully accept the popular view. The Government have rejected both the suggestions and insist upon applying coercive measures for the collection of revenue. It may be mentioned that these measures have never been totally suspended and in many cases the Ryots have paid simply under pressure. the Talatis have taken away cattle, have had returned them only after the payment of assessment. In one case I witnessed a painful incident:—A man having his milch buffalo taken away from him, and it was only on my happening to go to the village that the buffalo was released; this buffalo was the most valuable property the man possessed and a source of daily bread for him. Scores of such cases have already happened and many more will no doubt happen hereafter if the public opinion is not ranged on the side of the people. Every means of seeking redress by prayer has been exha-

usted. Interviews with the Collector, the Commissioner and His Excellency have taken place. The final suggestion that was made is this:—

Although in the majority of cases people are entitled to full suspension, half-suspension should be granted, throughout the District except for the villages which show, by common consent, crops over six annas. Such a gracious concession may be accompanied by a declaration that the Government would expect those who have ready means voluntarily to pay up the dues, we the workers on our part undertaking to persuade such people to pay up the Government dues. This will leave only the poorest people untouched. I venture to submit that acceptance of this suggestion can only bring credit and strength to the Government. Resistance of popular will can only produce discontent which in the case of fear-stricken peasantry such as of Kaira can only find an underground passage and thus demoralise them. The present movement is an attempt to get out of such a false position, humiliating alike for the Government and the people. And how the Government propose to assert their position and so-called prestige? They have a 'Revenue Code' giving them unlimited powers without a right of appeal to the Ryots against the decisions of the Revenue Authorities. Exercise of these powers in a case like the one before us in which the Ryots are fighting for a principle and the authorities for prestige would be a prostitution of justice of a disavowal of all fair-play. These powers are:—

- (1) Right of summary execution,
- (2) Right of exacting a quarter of the assessment as punishment.

(3) Right of confiscation of land, not merely 'Raiatwari' but even 'Inami' or 'Sanadia', and the right of keeping a man under *hajat*.

These remedies may be applied singly or all together, and unbelievable though it may seem to the public, it may be mentioned that notices of the application of all these remedies but the last have been issued. Thus a man owning two hundred acres of land in perpetuity and valued at thousands of Rupees, paying a small assessment rate, may at the will of the authority lose the whole of it; because for the sake of principle he respectfully refuses voluntarily to pay the assessment himself and is prepared meekly but under strong protest to submit to penalties that may be inflicted by law. Surely vindictive confiscation of property ought not to reward for orderly disobedience which if properly handled can only result in progress all round and in giving the Government a bold and a frank peasantry with a will of its own.

I venture to invite the press and the public to assist these cultivators of Kaira who have dared to enter-up a fight for what they consider is just and right. Let the public remember this also that unprecedentedly severe plague has decimated the population of Kaira. People are living outside their homes in specially prepared thatched cottages at considerable expenses to themselves. In some villages mortality has been tremendous. Prices are

*The Kaira Distress.*

ruling high on which owing to the failure of crops they can but take little advantage and have to suffer all the disadvantages thereof. It is not money they want, so much as the voice of a strong unanimous and emphatic public opinion.

## THE KAIRA RYOTS AND THE COMMISSIONER

*The following letter of protest has been sent by  
Mr. Gandhi to the Press :—*

The publication of the summary of the Commissioner's Gujarati address to the Kaira cultivators necessitates a reply in justice to the latter as also the workers.

I have before me a verbatim report of the speech. It is more direct than the summary in the laying down of the Government policy. The Commissioner's position is that the revenue authorities' decision regarding suspension is final. They may and do receive and hear complaints from the ryots, but the finality of their decision cannot be questioned. This is the crux of the struggle. It is contended on behalf of the Ryots that, where there are in matters of administrative orders, sharp differences of opinion between local officials and then the points of differences are and ought to be referred to an impartial committee of inquiry. This, it is held, constitutes the strength of the British constitution. The Commissioner has on principle rejected the position and invited a crisis. And he has made such a fetish of it

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that he armed himself beforehand with a letter from Lord Willington to the effect that even he should not interfere with the Commissioner's decision. He brings in the war to defend his position and abjures the Ryots and me to desist from our cause at this time of peril to the Empire. But I venture to suggest that the Commissioner's attitude constitutes a peril far graver than the German peril, and I am serving the Empire in trying to deliver it from this peril from within. There is no mistaking the fact that India is waking up from its long sleep. The Ryots do not need to be literate to appreciate their rights and their duties. They have but to realise their invulnerable power and no Government, however strong can stand against their will. The Kaira Ryots are solving an Imperial problem of the first magnitude in India. They will show that it is impossible to govern men without their consent. Once the Civil Service realises this position it will supply to India truly 'civil servants' who will be the bulwark of the people's rights. To-day the Civil Service rule is a rule of fear. The Kaira Ryot is fighting for the rule of love. It is the Commissioner who has produced the crisis. It was, as it is now, his duty to placate the people when he saw that they held a different view. The revenue of India will be no more in danger because a Commissioner yields to the popular demands and grants concessions than the administration of justice was in danger when Mr. Maybrick was reprieved purely in obedience to the popular will, or the Empire was in danger because a corner of a mosque in Cawnpore was

replaced in obedience to the same demand. Had I hesitated to advise the people to stand firm against the Commissioner's refusal to listen to their prayer, instead of taking the open and healthy course it has taken, their discontent would have burrowed under and bred ill-will. That son is a true son of his father who rather than harbour ill-will against him frankly but respectfully tells him all he feels and equally respectfully resists him, if he cannot truthfully obey his commands. I apply the same law to the relations between the Government and the people. There cannot be reasons when a man must suspend his conscience. But just as a wise father will quickly agree with his son and not incur his ill-will, especially if the family was in danger from without, even, so a wise Government will quickly agree with the Ryots rather than incur their displeasure. War cannot be permitted to give a license to the officials to exact obedience to their orders, even though the Ryots may consider them to be unreasonable and unjust.

The Commissioner steels the hearts of the Ryots of continuing their course by telling them that for a revenue of four lakhs of rupees he will ever confiscate over a hundred and fifty thousand acres of land worth over three crores of rupees and for ever declare the holders, their wives and children unworthy of holding any lands in Kaira. He considers the Ryots to be misguided and contumacious in the same breath. These are solemn words.

### *The Kaira Distress.*

“Do not be under the impression that our mamlatdars and our talatis will realise the assessment by attaching and selling your moveable property. We are not going to trouble ourselves so much. Our officers' time is valuable. Only by your bringing in the monies shall the treasuries be filled. This is no threat. You take it from me that parents never threaten their children. They only advise. But if you do not pay the dues your lands will be confiscated. Many people say that this will not happen. But I say it will. I have no need to take a vow I shall prove that I mean what I say. The lands of those who do not pay will be confiscated. Those who are contumacious will get no lands in future. Government do not want their names on their Records of Right. Those who go out shall never be admitted again.”

I hold that it is the sacred duty of every loyal citizen to fight unto death against such a spirit of vindictiveness and tyranny. The Commissioner has done the Ahmedabad strikers and me a cruel wrong, in saying that the strikers knowingly broke their vow. He was present at the meeting where the settlement was declared. He may hold that the strikers had broken their vow (though his speech at the meeting produced a contrary impression) but there is nothing to show that the strikers knowingly broke their vow. On the contrary it was entirely kept by their resuming their work on their getting for the first day wages demanded by them, and the final decision as to wages being referred to arbitration. The strikers



had suggested arbitration which the mill-owners had rejected. Their struggle in its essence was for a thirty-five per cent. increase in their wages or such increase as an arbitration board may decide. And this is what they have got. The hit at the strikers and me is I regret to have to say a hit below the belt.

## FIGHT TO MAINTAIN TRUTH

*[On 18th April, 1918, Mahatma Gandhi and company visited Ras—a large village in Borsad Taluka. A large meeting of two thousand and five hundred cultivators was held at which agriculturists from the villages of Juntrul, Banihari, Kanubha, Amiyad, Dival, Dabhasi, Gorel Sappur, Khanpur, Vadeli and Kathana, were present] :—*

The Mahatmaji in his address said that he had full knowledge of the responsibility he had undertaken by giving them the advice 'he did. He was also aware that it was increasing day by day. And yet he said he did not think he ever dreamt that he should withdraw the advice. As days passed by he felt that had he not given them the advice he had, he would have been untrue to the salt of Gujerat, and there would have been a gap in his service which he was peacefully rendering to it.

He then pointed out the two reasons why he advised them so. Firstly, that men as well as women would be ennobled by it. Secondly, to assert the right of the people to be heard when there was difference of opinion between the people and the Government. Mr. Gandhi said: "The Government has been acting till now as if the people's

opinions count for nothing. Such is the experience of members of legislative councils and municipalities. We have got no scope there to assert our opinions." He then described how people lived in fear of Government officials. He said: "Such a condition of yours is even worse than that of brutes." He then asked them to give up fear, if they wanted to be 'men.'

Proceeding, he said that the nature of our struggle was twofold. Firstly, it will teach us to be fearless. He said: We are not going to be insolent in our fight. We desire to fight by means of soul-force. We are not going to win success in our struggle by giving pains to others. We shall obtain success enduring pain ourselves. Our 'shastras' say that to obtain happiness we have to endure pain. What did 'Dashrath' do to obtain such sons as Bharat, Ram, Laxman and Shatrughna? He performed penances. What did Nala do? Austerities. He endured a great deal of pains for the sake of his self-respect, for preserving Truth. Damyanti also endured pain for the same. That is why we remember them in our morning prayer. Such men have left us a heritage of that virtue truth, and we are going to add to it by enduring more pain for the same. By enduring pain shall we able to remove it?"

He then pointed the twofold benefit involved in the struggle. First, it was that of suspension; second, that of teaching the Government to respect popular opinions. Finally he said: "Just as fire by its touch removes all

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dirt from things so 'Satyagraha' will remove all miseries and pains. It is a "panacea of all evils."

## INDIA AND HOME RULE

*The following letter was addressed by Mr. Gandhi to the Viceroy:—*

DELHI, April 29, 1918.

Sir,—As you are aware, after careful consideration I felt constrained to convey to your Excellency that I could not attend the Conference for reasons stated in my letter of the 26th instant, but after the interview you were good enough to grant me I persuaded myself to join it,—if for no other cause than certainly out of my great regard for yourself.

One of my reasons for abstention—and perhaps the the strongest—was that Mr. Tilak, Mrs. Besant, and the brothers Ali, whom I regard as among the most powerful leaders of public opinion, were not invited to the Conference: I still feel that it was a grave blunder not to have asked them, and I respectfully suggest that the blunder might be possibly repaired, if these leaders were invited to assist the Government by giving it the benefit of their advice at the Provincial Conferences which, I understand, are to follow. I venture to submit that no Government can afford to disregard leaders who represent large masses of the people, as these do, even though they

may hold views fundamentally different. At the same time, it gives me pleasure to be able to say that the views of all parties were permitted to be freely expressed at the Committees of the Conference. For my part, I purposely refrained from stating my views, either at the Committee—at which I had the honour of serving,—or at the Conference itself. I felt that I could best serve the objects of the Conference by simply tendering my support to the resolutions submitted to it,—and this I have done without any reservation. I hope to translate the spoken word into action as early as the Government can see its way to accept my offer which I am submitting simultaneously herewith in a separate letter. I recognise that, in the hour of its danger, we must give—as we have decided to give,—ungrudging and unequivocal support to the Empire, of which we aspire in the near future, to be partners in the same sense as the Dominions overseas. But it is the simple truth, that our response is due to the expectation that our goal will be reached all the more speedily on that account,—even as the performance of duty automatically confers a corresponding right. The people are entitled to believe that the imminent reform, alluded to in your speech, will embody the main general principles of the Congress League scheme, and I am sure that it is this faith which has enabled many members of the Conference to tender to the Government that full-hearted co-operation.

If I could make my countrymen retrace their steps, I would make them withdraw all the Congress Resolu-

tions, and not whisper "Home Rule" or "Responsible Government" during the pendency of the war. I would make India offer all her able-bodied sons as a sacrifice to the Empire at its critical moment; and I know that India by this very act would become the most favoured partner in the Empire and racial distinctions would become a thing of the past. But practically the whole of educated India has decided to take a less effective course, and it is no longer possible to say that educated India does not exercise any influence on the masses. I have been coming into most intimate touch with the ryots ever since my return from South Africa to India, and I wish to assure you that the desire for Home Rule has widely penetrated them. I was present at the sessions of the last Congress, and I was a party to the Resolution that full Responsible Government should be granted to British India within a period to be fixed definitely by a Parliamentary Statute. I admit that it is a bold step to take, but I feel sure that nothing less than a definite vision of Home Rule,—to be realised in the shortest possible time,—will satisfy the Indian people. I know that there are many in India who consider no sacrifice too great in order to achieve the end; and they are wakeful enough to realise that they must be equally prepared to sacrifice themselves for the Empire in which they hope and desire to reach their final status. It follows, then, that we can but accelerate our journey to the goal by silently and simply devoting ourselves heart and soul, to the work of delivering the Empire from the threatening danger. It will be

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national suicide not to recognise this elementary truth. We must perceive that, if we serve to save the Empire we have in that very act secured Home Rule.

Whilst, therefore, it is clear to me that we should give to the Empire every available man for its defence, I fear that I cannot say the same thing about financial assistance. My intimate intercourse with the ryots convinces me that India has already donated to the Imperial Exchequer beyond her capacity. I know that in making the statement I am voicing the opinion of the majority of my countrymen.

The Conference means for me, and I believe for many of us a definite step in the consecration of our lives to the common cause. But ours is a peculiar position. We are to-day outside the partnership. Ours is a consecration based on the hope of a better future. I should be untrue to you and to my country, if I did not clearly and unequivocally tell you what that hope is. I do not bargain for its fulfilment. But you should know it. Disappointment of the hopes means disillusion.

There is one thing I may not omit. You have appealed to us to sink domestic differences. If the appeal involves the toleration of tyranny and wrong-doing on the part of officials, I am powerless to respond. I shall resist organised tyranny to the uttermost. The appeal must be to the officials that they do not ill treat a single soul, and that they consult and respect popular opinion as never before. In Champaran, by resisting an age long tyranny, I have shown the ultimate sovereignty of British



justice. In Kaira, a population that was cursing the Government now feels that *it*, and not the Government, is the power, when it is prepared to suffer for the truth it represents. It is, therefore, losing its bitterness and is saying to itself that the Government must be a Government for the people, for it tolerates orderly and respectful disobedience where injustice is felt. Thus, Champaran and Kaira affairs are my direct, definite, and special contribution to the war. Ask me to suspend my activities in that direction, and you ask me to suspend my life. If I could popularise the use of soul-force, which is but another name for love-force, in the place of brute-force, I know that I could present you with an India that could defy the whole world to do its worst. In season and out of season, therefore, I shall discipline myself to express in my life this eternal law of suffering and present it for acceptance to those who care. And if I take part in any other activity, the motive is to show the matchless superiority of that law.

Lastly, I would like you to ask His Majesty's Ministers to give definite assurances about Mahomedan States. I am sure you know that every Mahomedan is deeply interested in them. As a Hindu I cannot be indifferent to their cause. Their sorrows must be our sorrows. In the most scrupulous regard for the rights of these States, and for the Muslim sentiment as to places of worship, and in your just and timely treatment of the Indian claim to Home Rule lies the safety of the Empire.

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I write this, because I love the English nation, and I wish to evoke in every Indian the loyalty of the Englishman.

I remain,  
Your Excellency's faithful servant,  
(Sd.) M. K. GANDHI.

## GUZERAT POLITICAL CONFERENCE

### PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

*The first Guzerat Political Conference held at Godhra, on November 3, 1917, in which Mahatma Gandhi presided and delivered his address in Gujarati a translation of which reads as under :—*

Brothers and Sisters, —I am thankful to you all for the exalted position to which you have called me. I am but a baby of two years and a half in Indian politics. I cannot trade, here, on my experience in South Africa. I know that acceptance of the position is to a certain extent an impertinence. And yet I have been unable to resist the pressure your overwhelming affection has exerted upon me.

I am conscious of my responsibility. This conference is the first of its kind in Gujarat. The time is most critical for the whole of India. The empire is labouring under a strain never before experienced. My views do not quite take the general course. I feel that some of them run in the opposite direction. Under the circumstances, I can hardly claim this privileged position. The president of a meeting is usually its spokesman. I cannot pretend to lay any such claim. It is your kindness that

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gives me such a unique opportunity of placing my thoughts before the Gujarat public. I do not see anything wrong in these views being subjected to criticism, dissent, and even emphatic protest. I would like them to be freely discussed. I will only say with regard to them that they were not formed to-day or yesterday. But they were formed years ago. I am enamoured of them, and my Indian experience of two years and a half has not altered them.

I congratulate the originators of the proposal to hold this Conference as also those friends who have reduced it to practice. It is a most important event for Gujarat. It is possible for us to make it yield most important results. This conference is in the nature of a foundation, and if it is well and truly laid, we need have no anxiety as to the superstructure. Being the first progenitor, its responsibility is great. I pray that God will bless us with wisdom and that our deliberations will benefit the people.

This is a political conference. Let us pause a moment over the word 'political.' It is, as a rule, used in a restricted sense, but I believe it is better to give it a wider meaning. If the work of such a conference were to be confined to a consideration of the relations between the rulers and ruled, it would not only be incomplete, but we should, even fail to have an adequate conception of those relations. For instance the question of Mhowra flowers is of great importance for a part of Gujarat. If it is considered merely as a question between the

Government and the people, it might lead to an untoward end or even to one never desired by us. If we considered the genesis of the law on Mhowra flowers and also appreciated our duty in the matter, we would very probably succeed sooner in our fight with Government than otherwise, and we would easily discover the key to successful agitation. You will more clearly perceive my interpretation of the word 'political' in the light of the views now being laid before you.

Conferences do not, as a rule, after the end of their deliberations, appear to leave behind them an executive body, and even when such a body is appointed, it is, to use the language of the late Mr. Gokhale, composed of men who are amateurs. What is wanted in order to give effect to the resolutions of such conferences is men who would make it their business to do so. If such men come forward in great numbers, then and then only will such conferences be a credit to the country and produce lasting results. At present there is much waste of energy. It is desirable that there were many institutions of the type of the Servants of India Society. Only when men fired with the belief that service is the highest religion, come forward in great numbers, only then could we hope to see great results. Fortunately, the religious spirit still binds India, and if during the present age the service of the motherland becomes the end of religion, men and women of religion in large numbers would take part in our public life. When sages and saints take up this work India will easily achieve her cherished aims. At all

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events it is incumbent on us that for the purposes of this conference we formed an executive committee, whose business it would be to enforce its resolutions.

The sound of Swaraj pervades the Indian air. It is due to Mrs. Besant that Swaraj is on the lips of hundreds of thousands of men and women. What was unknown to men and women only two years ago, has by her consummate tact and her indefatigable efforts, become common property for them. There cannot be the slightest doubt that her name will take the first in rank in history among those who inspired us with the hope that Swaraj was attainable at no distant date. Swaraj was, and is, the goal of the Congress. The idea did not originate with her. But the credit of presenting it to us as an easily attainable goal belongs to that lady alone. For that we could hardly thank her enough. By releasing her and her associates, Messrs. Arundale and Wadia, Government have laid us under an obligation, and at the same time acknowledged the just and reasonable nature of the agitation for Swaraj. It is desirable that Government should extend the same generosity towards our brothers, Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali. It is no use discussing the appositeness or otherwise of what Sir William Vincent has said about them. It is to be hoped that the Government will accede to the people's desire for their release and thus make them responsible for any improper result that might flow from their release. Such clemency will make them all the more grateful to the Government. The act of generosity will be incomplete

so long as these brothers are not released. The grant of freedom to the brothers will gladden the people's hearts and endear the Government to them.

Mr. Montagu will shortly be in our midst. The work of taking signatures to the petition to be submitted to him is going on apace. The chief object of this petition is to educate the people about Swaraj. To say that a knowledge of letters is essential to obtain Swaraj betrays ignorance of history. A knowledge of letters is not necessary to inculcate among people the idea that we ought to manage our own affairs. What is essential is the grasp of such an idea. People have to desire Swaraj. Hundreds of unlettered kings have ruled kingdoms in an effective manner. To see how far such an idea exists in the minds of the people and to try to create it where it is absent, is the object of this petition. It is desirable that millions of men and women should sign it intelligently. That such a largely signed petition will have its due weight with Mr. Montagu is its natural result.

No one has the right to alter the scheme of reforms approved by the Congress and the Moslem League, and one need not, therefore, go into the merits thereof. For our present purposes we have to understand thoroughly the scheme formulated most thoughtfully by our leaders and to faithfully do the things necessary to get it accepted and enforced.

*This scheme is not Swaraj, but is a great step towards*

*Swaraj.* Some English critics tell us that we have no right to enjoy Swaraj, because the class that demands it is incapable of defending India. "Is the defence of India to rest with the English alone," they ask, "and are the reins of Government to be in the hands of the Indians." Now this is a question which excites both laughter and sorrow. It is laughable, because our English friends fancy that they are not of us, whilst our plan of Swaraj is based upon retention of the British connection. We do not expect the English settlers to leave this country. They will be our partners in Swaraj. And they need not grumble if in such a scheme the burden of the defence of the country falls on them. They are, however, hasty in assuming that we shall not do our share defending the country. When India decides upon qualifying herself for the act of soldiering, she will attain to it in no time. We have to put our hard feelings to be able to strike. To cultivate a hardened feeling does not take ages. It grows like weeds. The question has also its tragic side, because it puts us in mind of the fact that Government have up to now debarred us from military training. Had they been so minded they would have had at their disposal to-day, from among the educated classes, an army of trained soldiers. Government have to accept a larger measure of blame than the educated classes for the latter having taken little part in the war. Had the Government policy been shaped differently from the very commencement, they would have to-day an unconquerable army. But let no one be blamed for the



present situation. At the time British rule was established, it was considered to be a wise policy for the governance of crores of men to deprive them of arms and military training. But it is never too late to mend, and both the rulers and the ruled must immediately repair the omission.

In offering these views I have assumed the propriety of the current trend of thoughts. To me, however, it does not appear to be tending altogether in the right direction. Our agitation is based on the Western model. The Swaraj we desire is of a Western type. As a result of it, India will have to enter into competition with the Western nations. Many believe that there is no escape from it. I do not think so. I cannot forget that India is not Europe, India is not Japan, India is not China. The divine word that 'India alone is the land of Karma (Action), the rest is the land of Bhoga (Enjoyment),' is indelibly imprinted on my mind. I feel that India's mission is different from that of the others. India is fitted for the religious supremacy of the world. There is no parallel in the world for the process of purification that this country has voluntarily undergone. India is less in need of steel weapons, it has fought with divine weapons; it can still do so. Other nations have been votaries of brute-force. The terrible war going on in Europe furnishes a forcible illustration of the truth. India can win all by sou-force. History supplies numerous instances to prove that brute-force is as nothing before soul-force. Poets have sung about it and Seers have

described their experiences. A thirty-year old Hercules behaves like a lamb before his eighty-year old father. This is an instance of love-force. Love is Atman: it is its attribute. If we have faith enough we can wield that force over the whole world. Religion having lost its hold on us, we are without an anchor to keep us firm amidst the storm of modern civilisation, and are therefore being tossed to and fro. Enough, however, of this for the present. I shall return to it at a later stage.

In spite of my views being as I have just described them, I do not hesitate to take part in the Swaraj movement, for India is being governed in accordance with the 'Western system and even the Government admit that the British Parliament presents the best type of that system. Without parliamentary government, we should be nowhere. Mrs. Besant is only too true when she says that we shall soon be facing a hunger-strike, if we do not have Home Rule. I do not want to go into statistics. The evidence of my eyes is enough for me. Poverty in India is deepening day by day. No other result is possible. A country that exports its raw produce and imports it after it has undergone manufacturing processes, a country that in spite of growing its own cotton, has to pay crores of rupees for its imported cloth, cannot be otherwise than poor. It can only be said of a poor country that its people are spend-thrifts, because they ungrudgingly spend money in marriage and such other ceremonies. It must be a terribly poor country that cannot afford to spend enough

in carrying out improvements for stamping out epidemics like the plague. The poverty of a country must continuously grow when the salaries of its highly paid officials are spent outside it. Surely it must be India's keen poverty that compels its people, during cold weather, for want of woollen clothing, to burn their precious manure, in order to warm themselves. Throughout my wandering in India I have rarely seen a buoyant face. The middle classes are groaning under the weight of awful distress. For the lowest order there is no hope. They do not know a bright day. It is a pure fiction to say that India's riches are buried under ground, or are to be found in her ornaments. What there is of such riches is of no consequence. The nation's expenditure has increased, not so its income. Government have not deliberately brought about this state of thing. I believe that their intentions are pure. It is their honest opinion that the nation's prosperity is daily growing. Their faith in their Blue Books is immoveable. It is only too true that statistics can be made to prove anything. The economists deduce India's prosperity from statistics. People like me who appreciate the popular way of examining figures shake their heads over bluebook statistics. If the gods were to come down and testify otherwise, I would insist on saying that I see India growing poorer.

"What then would our Parliament do? When we have it, we would have a right to commit blunders, and to correct them. In the early stages we are bound to

make blunders. But we being children of the soil, won't lose time in setting ourselves right. We shall, therefore, soon find out remedies against poverty. Then our existence won't be dependent on Lancashire goods. Then we shall not be found spending untold riches on Imperial Delhi. It will, then bear some correspondence to the peasant cottage. There will be some proportion observed between that cottage and our Parliament House. *The nation to-day is in a helpless condition, it does not possess even the right to err. He who has no right to err can never go forward.* The history of the Commons is a history of blunders. Man, says an Arabian proverb, is error personified. *Freedom to err and the duty of correcting errors is one definition of Swaraj.* And such Swaraj lies in Parliament. That Parliament we need to-day. We are fitted for it to-day. We shall therefore get it on demand. It rests with us to define 'to-day.' Swaraj is not to be attained through an appeal to the British democracy. The English nation cannot appreciate such an appeal. Its reply will be :— "We never sought outside help to obtain Swaraj. We have received it through our own ability. You have not received it, because you are unfit. When you are fit for it, nobody can withhold it from you." How then shall we fit ourselves for it? We have to demand Swaraj from our own democracy. Our appeal must be to it. When the peasantry of India understand what Swaraj is, the demand will become irresistible. The late Sir W. W. Hunter used to say that in the British system, victory on

the battlefield was the shortest cut to success. If educated India could have taken its full share in the war, I am certain that we would not only have reached our goal already, but the manner of the grant would have been altogether unique. We often refer to the fact that many sepoys of Hindustan have lost their lives on the battle-fields of France and Mesopotamia. It is not possible for the educated classes to claim the credit for this event. It is not patriotism that had prompted those sepoys to go to the battle-field. They have gone to demonstrate that they are faithful to the salt they eat. In asking for Swaraj I feel that it is not possible for us to bring into account their services. The only thing we can say is that we may not be considered blame worthy for our inability to take a large active part in the prosecution of the war.

That we have been loyal at a time of stress is no test of fitness for Swaraj. Loyalty is no merit. It is a necessity of citizenship all the world over. That loyalty can be no passport to Swaraj is a self-demonstrated maxim. Our fitness lies in that we now keenly desire Swaraj, and in the conviction we have reached that bureaucracy, although it has served India with pure intentions, has had its day. And this kind of fitness is sufficient for our purpose. Without Swaraj there is now no possibility of peace in India.

But if we confine our activities for advancing Swaraj only to holding meetings, the nation is likely to suffer harm. Meetings and speeches have their own place:

and time. *But they cannot make a Nation.*

In a nation fired with Swaraj-zeal we shall observe an awakening in all departments of life. The first step to Swaraj lies in the Individual. The great truth, 'As with the Individual so with the Universe,' is applicable here as elsewhere. If we are ever torn by conflict from within, if we are ever going astray, and if instead of ruling our passions we allow them to rule us, Swaraj can have no meaning for us. Government of self, then, is primary education in the school of Swaraj.

Then the family. If dissensions reign supreme in our families, if brothers fight among themselves, if joint families, *i.e.*, families enjoying self-government, become divided through family quarrels, and if we are unfit even for such restricted Swaraj, how can we be considered fit for the larger Swaraj?

Now for the Caste. If caste-fellows become jealous of one another, if the castes cannot regulate their affairs in an orderly manner, if the elders want to usurp power, if the members become self-opinionated and thus show their unfitness for tribal self-government, how can they be fit for national self-government?

After caste the City Life. If we cannot regulate the affairs of our cities, if our streets are not kept clean, if our homes are dilapidated and if our roads are crooked, if we cannot command the services of selfless citizens for civic government, and those who are in charge of affairs are neglectful or selfish, how shall we claim larger powers? The way to national life lies through the

cities. It is, therefore, necessary to linger a little longer on civic government.

The plague has found a home in India. Cholera has been always with us. Malaria takes an annual toll of thousands. The plague has been driven out from every other part of the world. Glasgow drove it out as soon as it entered it. In Johannesburg it could appear but once. Its municipality made a great effort and stamped it out within a month, whereas we are able to produce little impression upon it. We cannot blame the Government for this state of things. In reality we cannot make our poverty answerable for it. None can interfere with us in the prosecution of any remedies that we might wish to adopt. Ahmedabad, for instance, cannot evade responsibility by pleading poverty. I fear that in respect of the plague we must shoulder the whole responsibility. It is a matter of wonderment that when the plague is working havoc in our rural quarters, cantonments, as a rule, remain free. Reasons for such immunity are obvious. In the cantonments the atmosphere is pure, houses detached, roads are wide and clean, the sanitary habits of the residents are exceptionally sound. Whereas ours are as unhygienic as they well could be. Our closets are pestilentially dirty. 90 per cent of our population go barefoot, people spit anywhere, perform natural functions anywhere, and are obliged to walk along roads and paths thus dirtied. It is no wonder that the plague has found a home in our midst.

Unless we alter the conditions of our cities, rid ourselves of dirty habits, and re-form our castes, Swaraj for us can have no value.

It will not be considered out of place here to refer to the condition of the so-called untouchables. The result of considering the most useful members of society as unworthy of being even touched by us, has been that we let them clean only a part of our closets. In the name of religion we ourselves would not clean the remainder for fear of pollution, and so in spite of personal cleanliness, a portion of our houses remains the dirtiest in the world, with the result that we are brought up in an atmosphere which is laden with disease germs. We were safe so long as we kept to our villages. But in the cities we ever commit suicide by reason of our insanitary habits.

Where many die before their death there is every probability that people are devoid of both religion and its practice. I believe that it ought not to be beyond us to banish the plague from India, and if we could do so, we shall have increased our fitness for Swaraj, as it could not be by agitation, no matter, howsoever great. This is a question meriting the serious consideration of our Doctors and Vaidyas.

Our sacred Dakorji is our next door neighbour. I have visited that holy place. Its unholiness is limitless. I consider myself a devout Vaishnavite. I claim, therefore, a special privilege of criticising the condition of Dakorji. The insanitation of that place is so great, that



one used to hygienic conditions can hardly bear to pass even twenty-four hours there. The pilgrims are permitted to pollute the tank and the streets as they choose. The keepers of the idol quarrel among themselves, and to add insult to injury, a receiver has been appointed to take charge of the jewellery and costly robes of the idol. It is our clear duty to set this wrong right. How shall we, Gujaratis, bent on attaining Swaraj, discharge ourselves in its army, if we cannot sweep our houses clean?

The consideration of the state of education in our cities also fills us with despondency. It is up to us to provide by private effort for the education of the masses. But our gaze is fixed upon Government, whilst our children are starving for want of education.

In the cities the drink evil is on the increase, tea-shops are multiplying, gambling is rampant. If we cannot remedy these evils how should we attain Swaraj whose meaning is government of ourselves?

We have reached a time when we and our children are likely to be deprived of our milk supply. Dairies in Gujarat are doing us infinite harm. They buy out practically the whole milk supply and sell its products butter, cheese etc., in a wider market. How can a nation whose nourishment is chiefly derived from milk allow this important article of food to be thus exploited? How can men be heedless of the national health, and think of enriching themselves, by such an improper use of this article or diet? Milk and its products are of such paramount value to the nation that

they deserve to be controlled by the municipalities. What are we doing about them?

I have just returned from the scene of Bakri-Id riots. For an insignificant cause, the two communities quarrelled, mischievous men took advantage of it, and a mere spark became a blaze. We were found to be helpless. We have been obliged to depend only upon Government assistance. This is a significant illustration of the condition I am trying to describe.

It will not be inopportune to dwell for a moment on the question of cow-protection. It is an important question. And yet it is entrusted to the so-called cow-protection societies. The protection of cows is an old custom. It has originated in the necessity of the condition of the country. Protection of its cows is incumbent upon a country, 73 per cent of whose population lives upon agriculture, and uses only bullocks for it. In such a country even meat-eaters should abstain from beef-eating. These natural causes should be enough justification for not killing cows. But here we have to face a peculiar situation. The chief meaning of cow-protection seems to be to prevent cows from going into the hands of our Mussalman brethren, and being used as food. The governing class seem to need beef. In their behalf thousands of cows are slaughtered daily. We take no steps to prevent the slaughter. We hardly make any attempt to prevent the cruel torture of cows by certain Hindu dairies of Calcutta which subject them to certain indescribable practices and make them yield the last drop

of milk. In Gujarat Hindu drivers use spiked sticks to goad bullocks into action. We say nothing about it. The bullocks of our cities are to be seen in a pitiable condition. Indeed, protection of the cow and her progeny is a very great problem. With us it has degenerated into a pretext for quarrelling with the Mahomedans, and we have thus contributed to a further slaughter of cows. It is not religion, but want of it, to kill a Mahomedan brother who declines to part with his cow. I feel sure that if we were to negotiate with our Mussalman brothers upon a basis of love, they will appreciate the peculiar condition of India and readily co-operate with us in the protection of cows. By courtesy and even by Satyagraha we can engage them in that mission. But in order to be able to do this, we shall have to understand the question in its true bearing. We shall have to prepare rather to die than to kill. But we shall be able to do this only when we understand the real value of the cow and have pure love for her. Many ends will be automatically served in achieving this one end. Hindus and Mahomedans will live in peace, milk and its products will be available in a pure condition and will be cheaper than now, and our bullocks will become the envy of the world. By real *tapasya* it is possible for us to stop cow-slaughter whether by the English, Mahomedans or Hindus. This one act will bring Swaraj many a step nearer.

Many of the foregoing problems belong to municipal government. We can, therefore, clearly see that *national*

*government is dependent upon purity of the government of our cities.*

It will not be considered an improper statement to say that the Swadeshi movement is in an insane condition. We do not realise that Swaraj is almost wholly obtainable through Swadeshi. If we have no regard for our respective vernaculars, if we dislike our clothes, if our dress repels us, if we are ashamed to wear the sacred *Shikha*, if our food is distasteful to us, our climate is not good enough, our people uncouth and unfit for our company, our civilisation faulty and the foreign attractive, in short if everything native is bad and everything foreign pleasing to us, I should not know what Swaraj can mean for us. If everything foreign is to be adopted, surely it will be necessary for us to continue long under foreign tutelage, because foreign civilisation has not yet permeated the masses. It seems to me that before we can appreciate Swaraj, we should have not only love, but passion, for Swadeshi. Every one of our acts should bear the Swadeshi stamp. Swaraj can only be built upon the assumption that most of what is national is on the whole sound. If the view here put forth be correct, the Swadeshi movement ought to be carried on vigorously. Every country that has carried on the Swaraj movement has fully appreciated the Swadeshi spirit. The Scotch Highlanders hold on to their kilts even at the risk of their lives. We humorously call the Highlanders the 'petticoat brigade.' But the whole world testifies to the strength that lies behind that petticoat.

and the Highlanders of Scotland will not abandon it, even though it is an inconvenient dress, and an easy target for the enemy. The object in developing the foregoing argument is not that we should treasure our faults but that what is national, even though comparatively less agreeable, should be adhered to, and that what is foreign should be avoided though it may be more agreeable than our own. That which is wanting in our civilisation can be supplied by proper effort on our part. I do hope that the Swadeshi spirit will possess every member in this assembly, and that we would carry out the Swadeshi vow in spite of great difficulties and inconvenience. Then Swaraj will be easy of attainment.

The foregoing illustrations go to show that our movement should be twofold. We may petition the Government, we may agitate in the Imperial Council for our rights, but for a real awakening of the people, internal activity is more important. There is likelihood of hypocrisy and selfishness tainting external activity. There is less danger of such a catastrophe in the internal activity. Not only will external activity without being balanced by the internal, lack grace but it is likely to be barren of results. It is not my contention that we have no internal activity at all, but I submit that we do not lay enough stress upon it. "One sometimes hears it said, 'Let us get the government of India in our own hands and every thing will be alright.' There could be no greater superstition

then this. No nation has thus gained its independence. The splendour of the spring is reflected in every tree, the whole earth is then filled with the freshness of youth. Similarly when the Swaraj spirit has really permeated society, a stranger suddenly come upon us will observe energy in every walk of life, he will find national servants engaged, each according to his own abilities, in a variety of public activities.

If we admit that our progress has not been what it might have been, we shall have to admit two reasons for it. We have kept our women strangers to these activities of ours, and have thus brought about paralysis of half the national limb. The nation walks with one leg only. All its work appears to be only half or incompletely done. Moreover, the learned section having received its education through a foreign tongue, has become enervated and it is unable to give the nation the benefit of such ability as it possesses. I need not reiterate my views on this subject, as I have elaborated them in my address delivered before the Gujarat Education Conference. It is a wise decision, that of conducting the proceedings of this Conference in Gujarati and I hope that all Gujaratis will adhere to the determination and resist every temptation to alter it.

The educated classes, lover of Swaraj, must freely mix with the masses. We dare not reject a single member of the community. We shall make progress only if we carry all with us. Had the educated class identified itself with the masses Bakri—Id riots would have been

an impossibility.

Before coming to the last topic, it remains for me to refer to certain events as a matter of duty, and to make one or two suggestions. Every year the god of death exacts his toll from among our leaders. I do not intend to mention all such occasions of sorrow. But it is impossible to omit reference to grand Old Man of India. Who am I to estimate the value of the service rendered to the country by the deceased patriot? I have only sat at his feet. I paid my respects to him when I went to London as a mere lad. I was privileged to carry with me a note of introduction to him and from the moment of presentation I became his worshipper. Dadabhai's flawless and uninterrupted service to the country, his imparatality, his spotless character, will always furnish India with an ideal servant of his country. May God give him peace! May He grant his family and the Nation the ability to bear the loss! It is possible for us to immortalise him, by making his character our own. by copying his manner of service and by enthroning him for ever in our hearts. May the great soul of Dadabhai watch over our deliberations!

It is our duty to express our thanks to His Excellency the Viceroy for having announced the decision of the Government of India to abolish what is known as the Viramgam customs. This step should have been taken earlier. The nation was groaning under the weight of this impost. Many have lost their calling by reason of it. It has caused much suffering to many a woman. The deci-

sion has not yet been reduced to practice. It is to be hoped that it will soon be.

I have submitted through the Press my experiences about the hardships of third class railway travellers. They are, indeed, intolerable. The people of India are docile, they have received training in silent suffering. Thousands, therefore, put up with the hardships and they remain unredressed. There is merit in such suffering. But it must have its limits. Submission out of weakness is unmanliness. That we tamely put up with the hardships of railway travelling is probably proof of our unmanliness. These hardships are twofold. They are due to the remissness of railway administration as also that of the travelling public. The remedies are also, therefore, twofold. Where the railway administration is to blame, complaints should be addressed to it, even in Gujarati. The matter should be ventilated in the press. Where the public are to blame, the knowing travellers should enlighten their ignorant companions, as to their carelessness and dirty habits. Volunteers are required for this purpose. Every one can do his share, according to his ability, and the leading men might, in order to appreciate the difficulties of third class travelling, resort to it from time to time, without making themselves known, and bring their experiences to the notice of the administration. If these remedies are adopted, we should, in a short time, see great changes.\*

An inter-departmental committee recently sat in London to consider certain measures about the supply



of indentured labour to Fiji and the other sister islands. The Report of that committee has been published and the Government of India have invited the opinion of the public upon it. I need not dwell at length upon the matter as I have submitted my views already through the press. I have given it as my opinion that the recommendation of the committee, if adopted, will result in a kind of indenture. We can therefore only come to one conclusion. We can have no desire to see our labouring classes emigrating under bondage in any shape or form. There is no need for such emigration. The law of indenture should be totally abolished. It is no part of our duty to provide facilities for the Colonies.

I now reach the concluding topic. There are two methods of attaining the desired end: Truthful and Truthless. In our scriptures they have been described respectively as Divine and Devilish. In the path of Satyagraha there is always unflinching adherence to Truth. It is never to be forsaken on any account, not even for the sake of one's country. The final triumph of Truth is always assumed for the Divine method. Its votary does not abandon it even though at times the path seems impenetrable and beset with difficulties and dangers, and a departure however slight from that straight path may appear full of promise. His faith even then shines resplendent like the midday sun and he does not despond. With truth for sword, he needs neither steel nor gunpowder. He conquers the enemy by the force of the soul, which is Love. Its tests is not to

be found among friends. There is neither newness, nor merit, nor yet effort in a friend, loving, a friend. It is tested truly when it is bestowed on the so called enemy: it then becomes a virtue, there is effort in it, it is an act of manliness and real bravery. We can adopt this method towards the Government and doing so, we should be in a position to appreciate their beneficial activities and with greater ease correct their errors because we should draw attention to them not in anger but in Love. Love does not act through fear. There can therefore, be no weakness in its expression. A coward is incapable of exhibiting Love, it is the prerogative of the brave. Following this method we shall not look upon all Governmental activity with suspicion, we shall not ascribe bad motives to them. And our examination of their actions, being directly by Love, will be unerring and is bound therefore to carry conviction with them.

Love has its struggles. In the intoxication of power man often fails to detect his mistakes. When that happens a Passive Resister does not sit still. He suffers. He disobeyes the ruler's laws and order in a civil manner, and willingly incurs hardships caused by such disobedience, [e.g. imprisonment and gallows.] Thus is the soul disciplined. Here there is no waste of energy, and any untoward results of such respectful disobedience are suffered merely by him and his companions. A Passive Resister is not at sixes and sevens with those in power but the latter willingly yield to him.

*They know that they cannot effectively exercise force against the Passive Resister. Without his concurrence they cannot make him do their will. And this is the full fruition of Swaraj, because in it is complete independence.* It need not be taken for granted that such decorous resistance is possible only in respect of civilised rulers. Even a heart of flint will melt in front of a fire kindled by the power of the soul. Even a Nero becomes a lamb when he faces Love. This is no exaggeration. It is as true as an algebraical equation. This Satyagraha is India's special weapon. It has had others, but Satyagraha has commanded greater attention. It is omni-present, and is capable of being used at all times and under all circumstances. It does not require a Congress license. He who knows its power cannot help using it. Even as the eye-lashes automatically protect the eyes, so does Satyagraha when kindled automatically protect the Freedom of the Soul.

But truthlessness has opposite attributes. The terrible war going on in Europe is a case in point. Why should a nation's cause be considered right and another's wrong because it overpowers the latter by sheer brute-force? The strong are often seen preying upon the weak. The wrongness of the latter's cause is not to be inferred from their defeat in a trial of brute strength, nor is the rightness of the strong to be inferred from their success in such a trial. The wielder of brute-force does not scruple about the means to be used. He does not

question the propriety of means, if he can somehow achieve his purpose. This is not Dharma, it is Adharma. In Dharma, there cannot be a particle of untruth, cruelty or the taking of life. The measure of Dharma is the measure of love, kindness, truth. Heaven itself is no acceptable exchange for them. Swaraj itself is useless at the sacrifice of Truth. Sacrifice of Truth is the foundation of a nation's destruction. The believer in brute-force becomes impatient and desires the death of the so-called enemy. There can be but one result of such an activity. Hatred increases. The defeated party vows vengeance, and simply bides his time. Thus does the spirit of revenge descend from father to son. It is much to be wished that India may not give predominance to the worship of brute force. If the members of this assembly will deliberately accept Satyagraha in laying down its own programme they will reach their goal all the easier for it. They may have to face disappointment in the initial stages. They may not see results for a time. But Satyagraha will triumph in the end. The brute-force-man like the oilman's ox moves in a circle. It is a motion, but it is not progress. Whereas the votary of Truth-force ever moves forward.

A superficial critic reading the forgoing is likely to conclude that the views herein expressed are mutually destructive. On the one hand I appeal to the Government to give military training to the people. On the other I put Satyagraha on the pedestal. Surely there can be no room for the use of arms in Satyagraha,

nor is there any. But military training is intended for those who do not believe in Satyagraha. That the whole of India will ever accept Satyagraha is beyond my imagination. Not to defend the weak is an entirely effeminate idea, everywhere to be rejected. In order to protect our innocent sister from the brutal designs of a man we ought to offer ourselves a willing sacrifice and by the force of Love conquer the brute in the man. But if we have not attained that power, we would certainly use up all our bodily strength in order to frustrate those designs. The votaries of soul-force and brute-force are both soldiers. The latter, bereft of his arms, acknowledges defeat, the former does not know what defeat is. He does not depend upon the perishable body and its weapons, but he derives his strength from the unconquerable and immortal soul. The thing outside the two is not a man, for he does not recognise the Dweller within him. If he did, he would not take fright and run away from danger. Like a miser trying to save his flesh, he loses all, he does not know how to die. But the armoured soldier always has death by him as a companion. There is hope of his becoming a Passive Resister, and one has a right to hope that India, the holy land of the gods, will ever give the predominant place to the divine force, rather than to the brute-force. Might is right, is a formula which, let us hope, will never find acceptance in India. Her formula, is Truth alone conquers.

Upon reflection, we find that we can employ

Satyagraha even for social reform. We can rid ourselves of many defects in our social institutions. We can settle the Hindu Mohammedan problem, and we can deal with political questions. It is well that for the sake of facilitating progress we divide our activities according to the subjects handled. But it should never be forgotten that all are inter-related. It is not true to say that neither religion nor social reform has anything to do with politics. The result obtained by bringing religion into play in the consideration of political subjects will be different from that obtained without it. The Hindus can ill-afford to neglect 56 lacs of ignorant Sadhus in considering political matters. Our Mussalman brethren cannot lose sight of their Fakeers. In advancing political progress, the condition of our widows and child marriages must have their proper place, and the purdah must tax Mussalman wit. Nor can we, Hindus and Muhammadans, in considering politics shut our eyes to scores of questions that arise between us.

Indeed our difficulties are like the Himalayas. But we have equally powerful means at our disposal for removing them. We are children of an ancient nation. We have witnessed the burial of civilizations, those of Rome, Greece, and Egypt. Our civilization abides even as the ocean in spite of its ebbs and flows. We have all we need to keep ourselves independent. We have the mountains that kiss the sky, we have the mighty rivers. We have the matchless beauties of nature, and we have handed down to us a heritage of deeds of valour. This

country is the treasure-house of *tapasya*. In this country alone do people belonging to different religions live together in amity. In this country alone do all the gods receive their due measure of worship. We shall disgrace our heritage, and our connection with the British nation will be vain, if in spite of such splendid equipment, by some unique effort, we do not conquer our conquerors. The English nation is full of adventure, the religious spirit guides it, it has unquenchable faith in itself, it is a nation of great soldiers, it treasures its independence, but it has given the place of honour to its commercial instinct, it has not always narrowly examined the means adopted for seeking wealth. It worships modern civilisation. The ancient ideals have lost their hold upon it. If, therefore, instead of imitating that nation we do not forget our past, we have real regard for our civilisation, we have firm faith in its supremacy, we shall be able to make a proper use of our connection with the British nation, and make it beneficial to ourselves, to them and to the whole world. I pray to the Almighty that this assembly taking its full share of this great work may shed lustre upon itself, upon Gujarat, and upon the whole of Bharatavarsha.

## REFORM SCHEME

*[The following letter was sent to the Hon. Mr. V. S. Srinicasa Sastri by Mahatma Gandhi] :—*

You have pressed me for my opinion on the Reform Scheme just published. As you know, I could not feel called upon to take an active part in the framing of the Congress League Scheme; I have not taken an all absorbing interest in controversial politics; I do not pretend that even now I have studied the reform proposals as a keen politician would. I feel, therefore, very great hesitation in expressing my opinion on it, but I recognise the weight of your argument in favour of my expressing such an opinion as I can form on the scheme. In my opinion then as an artistic production, the scheme now published is superior to the Congress-League Scheme. I further consider that both Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford have been inspired by an honest desire for a due fulfilment of the declaration of the 20th August and for the welfare of India. They have taken great pains over their most difficult and delicate task, and I cannot but think that any hasty rejection of their effort will be a misfortune for the country. In my humble opinion the scheme deserves a sympathetic handling



rather than a summary rejection, but it would need to be considerably improved before it is accepted by the reformers. After all, our standard of measurement must be the Congress League Scheme. Crude though it is, I think that we should with all the vehemence and skill that we can command press for the incorporation into it of the essentials of our own. I would, therefore, for instance, ask for the rejection of the doctrine of compartments. I very much fear that the dual system in provinces will be fatal to the success of the experiment, and as it may be only success of the experiment, that can take us to the next, and I hope in the final stage we cannot be too insistent that the idea of reservation should be dropped. One cannot help noticing an unfortunate suspicion of our intentions regarding the purely British as distinguished from the purely Indian interests. Hence, there is to be seen in the scheme elaborate reservations on behalf of these interests. I think that more than anything else it is necessary to have an honest, frank and straightforward understanding about these interests, and for me personally this is of much greater importance than any legislative feat that the British talent alone or a combination of British and Indian talent may be capable of performing. I would certainly in as courteous terms as possible but equally emphatic say that these interests will be held subservient to those of India as a whole and that, therefore, they are certainly in jeopardy in so far as they may be inconsistent with the general advance of India. Thus, if I had my way I would cut down the

### *Reform Scheme.*

military expenditure. I would protect local industries by heavily taxing goods that compete against products of our industries, and I would reduce to a minimum the British element in our services retaining only those that may be needed for our instruction and guidance. I do not think that they had or have any claim upon her attention, save by the right of conquest. The claim must clearly go by the board as soon as we have awakened to a consciousness of our National existence and possess the strength to vindicate our right to the restoration of what we have lost. To their credit let it be said that they do not themselves advance any claim by right of conquest. One can readily join in the tribute of praise bestowed upon the Indian Civil Service for their proficiency, devotion to duty and great organising ability. So far as material reward is concerned, that service has been more than handsomely paid and our gratitude otherwise can be best expressed by assimilating their virtues ourselves. No scheme of reform can possibly benefit India that does not recognise that the present administration is top-heavy and ruinously expensive, and for me even law, order and good government would be too dearly purchased if the price to be paid for it is to be the grinding poverty of the masses. The watchword of our reform councils will have to be not increase of taxation for the growing needs of a growing country, but a decrease of financial burdens that are sapping the foundation itself of organic growth. If this fundamental fact is recognised, there need be no suspicion of our motives, and I think I am perfectly safe

in asserting that in every other respect British interests will be as secure in the Indian hands as they are in their own. It follows from what I have said above that we must respectfully press for the Congress-League claim, for the immediate granting to Indians of 50 per cent. of the higher posts in the Civil Service. The above is but an indication of my view on the Scheme. It is a considered view so far as it goes, but it does not embody all the improvements that I should suggest for submission to His Majesty's Government. In due course, I take it, we shall endeavour to issue a representative criticism of the Scheme. It is, therefore, hardly necessary for me to enter into an exhaustive treatment even if I was capable of doing so.

I cannot, however, conclude my observation without stating what I consider to be the best means of enforcing our opinion. Whatever shape it may finally take, I entirely endorse the concluding remark of the authors of this historic document which thousands of Indian reformers are to-day studying with avidity that if anything could enhance the sense of responsibility under which our recommendations are made in a matter fraught with consequence so immense, it would be the knowledge that, even as we are bringing our report to an end, far greater issues still hang in the balance upon the battle-fields of France. It is there and not in Delhi or Whitehall that the ultimate decision of India's future will be taken. May God grant us, the Home Rulers, the wisdom to see this simple truth. The gateway to our freedom

### *Reform Scheme.*

is situated on the French soil. No victory worth the name has yet been won without the shedding of blood. If we could but crowd the battlefields of France with an indomitable army of Home Rulers fighting for victory for the cause of the Allies, it will also be a right for our own cause. We would then have made out an unanswerable case for the granting of Home Rule not in any distant or near future, but immediately. My advice, therefore, to the country would be to fight unconditionally unto death with Briton for victory and agitate simultaneously also unto death if we must for Reforms that we desire. This is the surest method of gaining an honourable victory for ourselves over the strongest opposition of bureaucratic forces, and at the end of it there would be no ill-will left. It may not be impossible to gain our end by sheer obstructive and destructive agitation, but it is easy enough to see that we shall at the same time reap ill-will between the British and the Indian elements, not a particularly cohesive cement for binding the would-be partners.

## SATYAGRAHA

The English expression "Passive Resistance" hardly denotes the force about which I propose to write. But Satyagraha, *i e*, Truthforce correctively conveys the meaning. Truth force is soul-force, and is the opposite of the force of arms. The former is a purely religious instrument, its conscious use is, therefore, possible only in men religiously inclined. Prahlad, Mirabai and others were Passive Resisters (in the sense in which the expression is here used). At the time of the Moroccan War the French guns were playing upon the Arabs of Morocco. The latter believed that they were fighting for their religion. They defied death and with "Allah" on their lips rushed into cannon's mouth. There was no room left here for them to deal death. The French gunners declined to work their guns against these Arabs. They threw up their hats in the air, rushed forward and with shouts of cheer embraced these brave Arabs. This is an illustration of "Passive Resistance." and its victory. The Arabs were not consciously "Passive Resisters." They prepared to face death in a fit to frenzy. The spirit of love was absent in them. A "Passive Resister." has no spirit of envy in him. It

is not anger that bids him court Death. But it is by reason of his ability to suffer that he refuses to surrender to the so-called enemy of the tyrant. Thus a "Passive Resister" has need to have courage, forgiveness and love. Imam Husain and his little band refused to yield to what to them appeared to be an unjust order. They knew at the time that Death alone would be their lot. If they yielded to it, they felt that their manhood and their religion would be in jeopardy. They, therefore, welcomed the embrace of Death. Imam Husain preferred the slaughter in his arms of his son and nephew for him and then to suffer from thirst rather than submit to what to him appeared to be an unjust order. It is my belief that the rise of Islam has been due not to the sword, but to the self-immolation alone of the Fakeers of Islam. There is little to boast of in the ability to wield the sword. When the striker finds out his mistake, he understands the sinfulness of his act which now becomes murder and has to repent for his folly. Where as he who courts death even though he might have done so in error, for him it is still a victory. "Passive Resistance" is the Religion of Ahimsa. It is, therefore, every where and always a duty and is desirable. Violence is Himsa and has been discarded in all religions. Even the devotees of methods of violence impose elaborate restrictions upon their use. "Passive Resistance" admits of no such limits. It is limited only by the insufficiency of the Passive Resister's strength to suffer.

No one else but a "Passive Resister" can answer

the question whether his "Passive Resistance" is lawful or otherwise. The public can only judge after the "Passive Resister" has begun his work. He cannot be deterred by public displeasure, His operations are not founded upon 'Arithmetical Formulae. He may be considered a clever politician or a thoughtful man who commences his so-called Passive Resistance only after having weighed chances of success and failure. But he is by no means a "Passive Resister." The former acts because he must.

Both soul-force and force of arms are from times immemorial. Both have received their due mead of praise in the accepted religious literature. They respectively represent Forces of Good and Evil. The Indian belief is that there was in this land a time when the forces of Good were predominant. That state still remains our ideal. Europe furnishes forcible illustration of predominance of the Forces of Evil.

Either of these is preferable to rank cowardice. Neither Swaraj nor an awakening among us is possible without resort to one or the other. "Swaraj is no Swaraj," which is gained without action. Such Swaraj could make no impression on the people. No awakening is possible without the people at large realising that power. In spite of protestations by leaders and effort by the government, if they and we do not give "Passive Resistance" due predominance, methods of violence will automatically gain strength. They are like weeds, they grow any how in any soil. For a cultivation of

“Passive Resistance” endeavour and courage form the necessary manure; and as weeds, if they are not rooted out, overwhelm a crop, even so will violence grow like weeds if the ground is not kept clean, by self-sacrifice, for the growth of “Passive Resistance” and violence that may have already taken root be not dealt with by loving hands. By the method of “Passive Resistance” we can wean from the error of their ways the youths who become impatient of and angered by what to them appears to be the Governmental Zoolum and we can strengthen the forces of good by enlisting in favour of “Passive Resistance” their heroism, their courage, and their power of endurance,

Therefore the sooner the spirit of “Passive Resistance” pervades the atmosphere the better it is. It will bless both the Raj and the Raiyat. A Passive Resister never wants to embarrass a Government or anybody else. He does not act thoughtlessly, he is never insolent. He, therefore, shuns boycott, but takes the Swadeshi vow as a part of his religion and never wavers in practising it. Fearing God alone, he is afraid of no other power. Fear of kings can never make him forsake the path of duty.



## TO THE PRESS

*[The following is the communication of Mr. Gandhi on the Satyagrah Pledge to the Press — February 28, 1919 :—]*

The step taken is probably the most momentous in the history of India. I give my assurance that it has not been hastily taken. Personally I have passed many sleepless nights over it. I have endeavoured duly to appreciate Government's position, but I have been unable to find any justification for the extraordinary Bills. I have read the Rowlatt Committee's report. I have gone through the narrative with admiration. Its reading has driven me to conclusions just the opposite of the Committee's. I should conclude from the report that secret violence is confined to isolated and very small parts of India, and to a microscopic body of people. The existence of such men is truly a danger to society. But the passing of the Bills, designed to affect the whole of India and its people and arming the Government with powers out of all proportion to the situation sought to be dealt with, is a greater danger. The Committee ignore the historical fact that the millions in India are by nature the gentlest on earth.

Now look at the setting of the Bills. Their introduction is accompanied by certain assurances by the Viceroy regarding the Civil Service and the British commercial interests. Many of us are filled with the greatest misgivings about the Viceregal utterance. I frankly confess I do not understand its full scope and intention. If it means that the Civil Service and the British commercial interests are to be held superior to those of India and its political and commercial requirements, no Indian can accept the doctrine. It can but end in a fratricidal struggle within the Empire. Reforms may or may not come. The need of the moment is a proper and just understanding upon this vital issue. No tinkering with it will produce real satisfaction. Let the great Civil Service Corporation understand that it can remain in India only as its trustee and servant, not in name, but in deed, and let the British Commercial Houses understand that they can remain in India only to supplement her requirements, and not to destroy indigenous art, trade and manufacture, and you have two measures to replace the Rowlatt Bills.

It will be now easy to see why I consider the Bills to be an unmistakable symptom of a deep-seated disease in the governing body. It needs, therefore, to be drastically treated. Subterranean violence will be the remedy applied by impetuous, hot-headed youths who will have grown impatient of the spirit underlying the Bills and the circumstances attending their introduction. The Bills must intensify the hatred and ill will against the State of

which the deeds of violence are undoubtedly an evidence. The Indian covenanters, by their determination to undergo every form of suffering make an irresistible appeal to the Government, towards which they bear no ill-will, and provide to the believers in the efficacy of violence, as a means of securing redress of grievances with an infallible remedy, and withal a remedy that blesses those that use it and also those against whom it is used. If the covenanters know the use of this remedy, I fear no ill from it, I have no business to doubt their ability. They must ascertain whether the disease is sufficiently great to justify the strong remedy and whether all milder ones have been tried. They have convinced themselves that the disease is serious enough, and that milder measures have utterly failed. The rest lies in the lap of the gods.

### THE SATYAGRAH PLEDGE

*Being conscientiously of opinion that the Bills known as the Indian Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill No. 1 of 1919, and the Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill No. II of 1919, are unjust, subversive of the principles of liberty and justice, and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals on which the safety of the community as a whole and the State itself is based, we solemnly affirm that in the event of these Bills becoming law and until they are withdrawn, we shall refuse civilly to obey these laws and such other laws as a committee to be hereafter appointed may think fit and further affirm that in this struggle we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person or property.*

## ALLAHABAD SPEECH

*[Mr. Gandhi in his speech at Allahabad on the 11th. March, 1919 explained the Satyagrah Pledge as follows :—]*

It behoves every one who wishes to take the Satyagraha Pledge to seriously consider all its factors before taking it. It is necessary to understand the principles of Satyagraha, to understand the main features of the Bills known as the Rowlatt Bills and to be satisfied that they are so objectionable as to warrant the very powerful remedy of Satyagraha being applied and, finally, to be convinced of one's ability to undergo every form of bodily suffering so that the soul may be set free and be under no fear from any human being or institution. Once in it, there is no looking back.

Therefore there is no conception of defeat in Satyagraha. A Satyagrahi fights even unto death. It is thus not an easy thing for everybody to enter upon it. It therefore behoves a Satyagrahi to be tolerant of those who do not join him. In reading reports of Satyagraha meetings I often notice that ridicule is poured upon those who do not join our movement. This is entirely against the spirit of the Pledge. In Satyagrah we expect to win over our opponents by self-suffering i. e.,

by love. The process whereby we hope to reach our goal is by so conducting ourselves as gradually and in an unperceived manner to disarm all opposition. Opponents as a rule expect irritation; even violence from one another when both parties are equally matched. But when Satyagraha comes into play the expectation is transformed into agreeable surprise in the mind of the party towards whom Satyagraha is addressed till at last he relents and recalls the act which necessitated Satyagraha. I venture to promise that if we act up to our Pledge day after day, the atmosphere around us will be purified and those who differ from us from honest motives, as I verily believe they do, will perceive that their alarm was unjustified. The violationists wherever they may be, will realise that they have in Satyagraha a far more potent instrument for achieving reform than violence whether secret or open, and that it gives them enough work for their inexhaustible energy. And the Government will have no case left in defence of their measures if as a result of our activity the cult of violence is notably on the wane if it has not entirely died out. I hope therefore that at Satyagraha meetings we shall have no cries of shame, and no language betraying irritation or impatience either against the Government or our countrymen who differ from us and some of whom have for years been devoting themselves to the country's cause according to the best of their ability.

## BOMBAY SPEECH.

*[At the Bombay Meeting against the Rowlatt Bills on 14th March 1919 Mr. Gandhi's speech which was in Gujarati was read out by his secretary. The speech ran as follows :—]*

I am sorry that owing to my illness I am unable to speak to you myself and have to have my remarks read to you. You will be glad to know that Sanyasi Shrad-dhanandji is gracing the audience to-day by his presence. He is better known to us as Mahatma Munshiramji, the Governor of Gurukul. His joining our army is a source of strength to us. Many of you have perhaps been keenly following the proceedings of the Viceregal Council. Bill No. 2 is being steamrolled by means of the Official majority of the Government and in the teeth of the unanimous opposition from the Non-Official members. I deem it to be an insult to the latter, and through them to the whole of India. *Satyagraha* has become necessary as much to ensure respect for duly expressed public opinion, as to have the mischievous Bills withdrawn. Grave responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the *Satyagrahis* though, as I have so often said, there is no such thing as defeat in *Satyagraha*, it

does not mean that victory can be achieved without *Satyagrahis* to fight for it; i.e., to suffer for it. The use of this matchless force is comparatively a novelty. It is not the same thing as Passive Resistance which has been conceived to be a weapon that can be wielded most effectively only by the strongest minded, and you may depend upon it that six hundred men and women who in this Presidency have signed the Pledge are more than enough for our purpose, if they have strong wills and invincible faith in their mission, and that is in the power of truth to conquer untruth which *Satyagrahis* believe the Bills represent. I use the word 'untruth' in its widest sense. We may expect often to be told—as we have been told already by Sir William Vincent—that the Government will not yield to any threat of Passive Resistance—*Satyagraha*—is not a threat, it is a fact; and even such a mighty Government as the Government of India will have to yield if we are true to our Pledge. For the Pledge is not a small thing. It means a change of heart. It is an attempt to introduce the religious spirit into politics. We may no longer believe in the doctrine of tit for tat: we may not meet hatred, by hatred violence, by violence, evil by evil; but we have to make a continuous and persistent effort to return good for evil. It is of no consequence that I give utterance to these sentiments. Every *Satyagrahi* has to live up to them. It is a difficult task, but with the help of God nothing is impossible. (Loud Cheers.)

## MADRAS SPEECH.

*[At the meeting held at the Madras Beach on the 15th March 1919 Mr. Gandhi, in responding to the welcome, said :—]*

You will forgive me for saying the few words that I want to say just now sitting in the chair. I am under strict medical orders not to exert myself, having got a weak heart. I am, therefore, compelled to have some assistance and to get my remarks, read to you I wish to say one word to you. Beware before you sign the Pledge. But if you do, you will see to it that you shall never undo the Pledge you have signed. May God help you and me in carrying out the Pledge.

*[Mr. Desai, after a few words of introduction, read the following message :—]*

I regret that owing to heart weakness I am unable to speak to you personally. You have no doubt attended many meetings, but those that you have been attending of late are different from the others in that at the meetings to which I have referred some immediate tangible action, some immediate definite sacrifice has been demanded of you for the purpose of averting a serious calamity that has overtaken us in the shape of what are known as the



Rowlatt Bills. One of them Bill No. I, has undergone material alterations and its further consideration has been postponed. In spite, however, of the alteration, it is mischievous enough to demand opposition. The Second Bill has probably at this very moment been finally passed by that Council, for in reality you can hardly call the Bill as having been passed by that august body when all its Non-Official members unanimously and in strong language opposed it. The Bills require to be resisted not only because they are in themselves bad, but also because Government who are responsible for their introduction have seen fit practically to ignore public opinion and some of its members have made it a boast that they can so ignore that opinion. So far it is common cause between the different schools of thought in the country. I have, however, after much prayerful consideration, and after very careful examination of the Government's standpoint, pledged myself to offer Satyagraha against the Bills, and invited all men and women who think and feel with me to do likewise. Some of our countrymen, including those who are among the best of the leaders, have uttered a note of warning, and even gone so far as to say that this Satyagraha movement is against the best interests of the country. I have naturally the highest regard for them and their opinion. I have worked under some of them. I was a babe when Sir Dinshaw Wacha and Babu Surendranth Bannerji were among the accepted leaders of public opinion in India. Mr. Sastriar is a politician who has dedicated his all to the country's cause. His since-

*Mr. Masur's Speech.*

city, his probity are all his own. He will yield to no one in the love of the country. There is a sacred and indissoluble tie binding me to him. My upbringing draws me to the signatories of the two Manifestoes. It is not, therefore, without the greatest grief and much searching of heart that I have to place myself in opposition to their wishes. But there are times when you have to obey a call which is the highest of all, i. e., the voice of conscience even though such obedience may cost many a bitter tear, nay even more, separation from friends, from family, from the state to which you may belong, from all that you have held as dear as life itself. For this obedience is the law of our being. I have no further and other defence to offer for my conduct. My regard for the signatories to the Manifesto remains undiminished, and my faith in the efficiency of Satyagraha is so great that I feel that if those who have taken the Pledge will be true to it we shall be able to show to them that they will find when we have come to the end of this struggle that there was no cause for alarm or misgivings. There is, I know, resentment felt even by some Satyagrahis over the Manifestoes. I would warn Satyagrahis that such resentment is against the spirit of Satyagraha. I would personally welcome an honest expression of difference of opinion from any quarter and more so from friends because it puts us on our guard. There is too much recrimination, inuendo and insinuation in our public life, and if the Satyagraha movement purges it of this grave defect, as it ought to, it

will be a very desirable by-product. I wish further to suggest to Satyagrahis that any resentment of the two Manifestoes would be but a sign of weakness on our part. Every movement, and Satyagraha most of all, must depend upon its own inherent strength, but not upon the weakness or silence of its critics.

Let us, therefore, see wherein lies the strength of Satyagraha. As the name implies it is in an insistence on truth which dynamically expressed means love; and by the law of love we are required not to return hatred for hatred, violence for violence but to return good for evil. As Shrimati Sarojini Devi told you yesterday the strength lies in a definite recognition of the true religious spirit and action corresponding to it, and when once you introduce the religious element in politics, you revolutionise the whole of your political outlook. You achieve reform then not by imposing suffering on those who resist it, but by taking the suffering upon yourselves and so in this movement we hope by the intensity of our sufferings to affect and alter the Government's resolution not to withdraw these objectionable Bills. It has, however, been suggested that the Government will leave the handful of Satyagrahis severely alone and not make martyrs of them. But there is here, in my humble opinion, bad logic and an unwarranted assumption of fact. If Satyagrahis are left alone, they have won a complete victory, because they will have succeeded in disregarding the Rowlatt Bills and even other

*Madras Speech.*

laws of the country, and in having thus shown that a civil disobedience of a Government is held perfectly harmless. I regard the statement as an unwarranted assumption of fact, because it contemplates the restriction of the movement only to a handful of men and women. My experience of Satyagraha leads me to believe that it is such a potent force that once set in motion it ever spreads till at last it becomes a dominant factor in the community in which it is brought into play, and if it so spreads, no Government can neglect it. Either it must yield to it or imprison the workers in the movement. But I have no desire to argue. As the English proverb says, the proof of the pudding lies in the eating. The movement for better or for worse has been launched. We shall be judged not by our words, but solely by our deeds. It is, therefore, not enough that we sign the pledge. Our signing it is but an earnest of our determination to act up to it, and if all who sign the Pledge act according to it, I make bold to promise that we shall bring about the withdrawal of the two Bills and neither the Government nor our critics will have a word to say against us. The cause is great, the remedy is equally great; let us prove worthy of them both.

## APPEAL TO THE VICEROY

*[A public meeting of the citizens of Madras was held on March 20, 1919, at the Beach opposite the Presidency College, Madras, to appeal to the Viceroy to withhold his assent to the Rowlatt Act and to convey to Mr. M. K. Gandhi their profound and respectful thanks for the trouble he had taken to visit Madras in order to strengthen the Satyagraha movement. As Mr. Gandhi did not attend owing to ill-health Mr. Desai read the following message from Mr. M. K. Gandhi.]*

FRIENDS.--This afternoon I propose to deal with some of the objections that have been raised against Satyagraha. After saying that it was a matter of regret that men like myself "should have embarked on this movement," Sir Wm. Vincent in winding up the debate on Bill No. 2 said, "they could only hope that (the Satyagraha), would not materialise. Mr. Gandhi might exercise great self-restraint in action, but there would be other young hot-headed men who might be led into violence which could not but end in disaster. Yielding to this threat, however, would be tantamount to complete abolition of the authority of the Governor-General-in-Council." If Sir William's fear as to violence is

### *Appeal to the Viceroy.*

realised, it would undoubtedly be a disaster. It is for every Satyagrahi to guard against that danger. I entertain no such fear because our creed requires us to eschew all violence and to resort to truth and self-suffering as the only weapons in our armoury. Indeed the Satyagraha movement is, among other things, an invitation to those who believe in the efficiency of violence for redress of grievances to join our ranks and honestly to follow our methods. I have suggested elsewhere that what the Rowlatt Bills are intended to do and what I verily believe they are bound to fail in achieving is exactly what the Satyagraha movement is pre-eminently capable of achieving. By demonstrating to the party of violence the infallible power of Satyagraha and by giving them ample scope for their inexhaustible energy we hope to wean that party from the suicidal method of violence. What can be more potent than an absolute statement, accompanied by corresponding action, presented in the clearest terms possible that violence is never necessary for the purpose of securing reforms? Sir William says that the movement has great potentialities of evil. The Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is said to have retorted, "and also of good." I would venture to improve upon the retort by saying, "only of good." It constitutes an attempt to revolutionize politics and to restore moral force to its original station. After all, the Government do not believe in an entire avoidance of violence i.e., physical force. The message of the West which, the Government of India, I presume, represent, is

succinctly put by President Wilson in his speech delivered to the Peace Conference at the time of introducing the League of Nations Covenant. "Armed force is in the background in this programme, but it is in the background, and if the moral force of the world will not suffice, physical force of the world shall." We hope to reverse the process, and by our action show that physical force is nothing compared to the moral force, and the moral force, never fails. It is my firm belief that this is the fundamental difference between modern civilisation and the ancient of which India, fallen though it is, I venture to claim, is a living representative. We, her educated children, seem to have lost faith in this—the grandest doctrine of life. If we could but restore that faith in the supremacy of Moral Force, we shall have made a priceless contribution to the British Empire, and we shall, without fail, obtain the reforms we desire and to which we may be entitled. Entertaining such views it is not difficult for me to answer Sir William's second fear as to the complete abolition of the authority of the Governor-General in Council. This movement is undoubtedly designed, effectively to prove to the Government that its authority is finally dependant upon the will of the people and not upon force of arms, especially when that will is expressed in terms of Satyagraha. To yield to a clear moral force cannot but entrance the prestige and the dignity of the yielder.

It is to such a movement that every man and woman in this great country is invited, but a movement that is

### *Appeal to the Viceroy.*

intended to produce far reaching results, and which depends, for success, on the purity and the capacity for self-suffering of those who are engaged in it, can only be joined after a searching and prayerful self-examination. I may not too often give the warning. I have given at Satyagraha meetings that everyone should think a thousand times before coming to it, but having come to it, he must remain in it, cost what it may. A friend came to me yesterday, and told me that he did not know that it meant all that was explained at a gathering of a few Satyagrahi friends and wanted to withdraw. I told him that he could certainly do so if he had signed without understanding the full consequences of the pledge. And I would ask everyone who did not understand the pledge as it has been explained at various meetings to copy this example. It is not numbers so much as quality that we want. Let me therefore note down the qualities required of a Satyagrahi. He must follow truth at any cost and in all circumstances. He must make a continuous effort to love his opponents. He must be prepared to go through every form of suffering, whether imposed upon him by the Government which he is civilly resisting for the time being, or only those who may differ from him. This movement is thus a process of purification and penance. Believe me that if we go through it in the right spirit all the fears expressed by the Government and some of our friends will be proved to be groundless and we will not only see the Rowlatt Bills withdrawn, but the country will recognise



*Mahatma Gandhi.*

in Satyagraha a powerful and religious weapon for securing reforms and redress of legitimate grievances.

## THE SATYAGRAHA DAY.

*[Mr. Gandhi published the following under date 23rd March during his stay in Madras :—]*

Satyagraha, as I have endeavoured to explain at several meetings, is essentially a religious movement. It is a process of purification and penance. It seeks to secure reforms or redress of grievances by self-suffering. I therefore venture to suggest that the second Sunday after the publication of the Viceregal Assent to Bill No. 2 of 1919 (*i.e.*, 6th April) may be observed as a day of humiliation and Prayer. As there must be an effective public demonstration in keeping with the character of the observance I beg to advise as follows :

- (i) A twenty-four hours' fast counting from the last meal on the preceding night, should be observed by all adults, unless prevented from so doing by consideration of religion or health. The fast is not to be regarded, in any shape or form, in the nature of a hunger-strike, or as designed to put any pressure upon the Government. It is to be regarded, for all Satyagrahis, as the necessary discipline to fit them for civil disobedience, contemplated in their Pledge, and for all others, as some slight token of the intensity of their wounded feelings

- (ii) All work, except such as may be necessary in the public interest, should be suspended for the day. Markets and other business places should be closed. Employees who are required to work even on Sundays may only suspend work after obtaining previous leave.

I do not hesitate to recommend these two suggestions for adoption by public servants. For though it is unquestionably the right thing for them not to take part in political discussion and gatherings, in my opinion they have an undoubted right, to express upon vital matters, their feelings in the very limited manner herein suggested.

- (iii) Public meetings should be held on that day in all parts of India, not excluding villages, at which Resolutions praying for the withdrawal of the two measures should be passed.

If my advice is deemed worthy of acceptance, the responsibility will lie in the first instance, on the various Satyagraha Associations, for undertaking the necessary work of organisation, but all other associations will, I hope, join hands in making this demonstration a success.

## TANJORE SPEECH.

*On the morning of the 24th March Mr. Gandhi arrived at Tanjore. In the after-noon, an open air meeting was held at the Besant Lodge at which Dewan Bahadur V. P. Madhava Rao, C. I. E., presided. The following is an abstract of Mr. Gandhi's speech :—]*

The acceptance, by the country, of the new criminal laws was a degradation, a humiliation. When a nation felt that any particular legislation was a national degradation they had a clear duty to discharge. In the countries of the West, when the governors did a wrong, there ensued bloodshed. In India, on the other hand, the people instinctively abhorred the doctrine of violence. Therefore, they had to find out by what other means they could enforce their will upon Government. They had found that speeches at public meetings and the resolutions of the Legislative Councils had been of no avail. The official majority have rejected the national will expressed through the elected members. In such circumstances by what other means could they impose their will on Government? He suggested that what Prahlada did towards his father Hiranyakasupu should be done by them towards Government. Hiranyakasupu issued a command to his son which conflicted with his conscience. The voice

of disciplined conscience was the voice of the divine and any man who refused to listen to that voiced egraded human dignity. The conscience of the speaker told him that they should act even as Prahlada acted against his father's, order : and if their conscience also told the same things they should do the same. Prahlada disobeyed his father's command without any irreverence of will or disaffection for him. He continued to love his father as he was still disobeying his order, and the very love he bore for his father made him point out to him his wrong which he dutifully resisted under the dictates of his conscience. This was what was called civil disobedience, or Satyagraha which meant the force of truth by the force of soul. If they accepted Satyagraha, they rejected the doctrine of physical violence. He hoped that they who were the descendants of Prahlada would not send him away emptyhanded. He had just then received a telegram that the Viceroy had given his consent to Bill No. 2. They could not better begin the use of soul-force than by adopting some rigorous measures of discipline. He has suggested in a letter to the Press that the second Sunday after the Viceroy had given his consent to the Bills which would be the 6th April, should be observed as a day of fast by all adults, men and women, who could fast. That was not to be mixed up with the hunger-strikes in England known in connection with the movement for suffrages for women. It was merely an expression of grief, an act of self-denial, a process of purification. It trained the Satyagrahi to begin and

### *Tanjore Speech.*

carry on his civil disobedience. On that day, they should suspend all transaction of business. He had even ventured to suggest that public servants also could participate in the general fast. He entirely conceded the doctrine that Government servants should not take part in politics, but, it did not mean the suppression of their conscience, and their freedom to share in national grief or national joy. In organising public meetings or in making speeches thereat, they should employ the most respectful and dignified language in speaking of Government and of their laws. In becoming language they should appeal to the Viceroy and to the Secretary of State to withdraw the new laws in question. In taking the pledge they should understand that they were to do no harm to life or to property, but work in peace and good will to all. Satyagraha would do what this legislation could not do, namely rid the country of violence. He hoped they would decide to accept it: and accepting it never once to retrace their steps from the vow after it had once been taken. They need not sign the pledge at the meeting but might take time to consider the matter calmly, not once or twice but fifty times, whether, in view to what was expected of them, they possessed the capacity for it for the discipline and the sacrifice that it required of them. They should remember that it was a sacred vow and that no Indian could break it with impunity. If they disapproved of it now, they would ere long find cause to regret they did not join the movement. If, from weakness or from any other cause they could not

*Mahatma Gandhi.*

advance to the centre of the fight they might, at least, remain at the circumference and along many of its lines help it in various ways. He hoped that God had given them sufficient strength and wisdom to take the vow and conscientiously discharge their duties at this critical moment in the fortunes of their country.

### TRICHINOPOLY SPEECH

*[At the meeting held at the Town Hall Square, Trichinopoly on 25th March, Mr. M. K. Gandhi who was received with great ovation made the following speech.]*

FRIENDS.—You will forgive me for not standing to speak to you. I am physically too weak to do so. You will also forgive me for speaking to you not in Tamil, but in English. It will give me some pleasure if I were to talk to you in Hindi, but it is a misfortune that you have not yet taken to the study of the national language. As you are aware, the opportunity is now offered to you of studying that language free of charge, and I hope that as many of you as you can will take advantage of the opportunity thus offered. However, I am on a different mission to-day.

I was yesterday in Tanjore. I ventured to extend to the community of Tanjore an invitation which I wish to extend to you also; but before I do so, I wish to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the beautiful address, the beautiful casket and the Tamil address that have been presented to me. As I do not accept any costly presents, the beautiful casket will go to the trust that has been formed which contains all the costly



presents that I have ever received in my life, and there, converted into money, it will be used for some other national purpose.

You say in the English address that there was a demonstration in the Transvaal or South Africa of the triumph of the spirit over matter. Your own belief in the triumph of the spirit over matter will be shortly put to the test. My invitation to you will ensure that test. You know the Rowlatt Bills perhaps so much as I do. I need not explain them. You all want them to be withdrawn. The Indian councillors in the Imperial Council tried their best to have this legislation withdrawn. They failed. The Bills are bad, but this flouting of the unanimous voice of the Indian members is worse and it is for you and for me, whose representatives these councillors are, to right this double wrong. How can it be righted? When the governors of a country do a great wrong to the people whom they govern, history teaches us that they have resorted to violence, sometimes with apparent success, often they have been defeated; but violence can only result in violence as darkness added to darkness really deepens it. The doctrine of violence is of the earth, earthy, merely material, and can be no guide for a human being who at all believes in the existence of the soul. If, as I am sure you will reject the doctrine of violence, you have to consider other means for seeking redress, and that, as I would translate would mean "Sathiam Prathi Sathiam." You have an instance given of it in the name mentioned this evening,

*Trichinopoly Speech.*

i.e., of Prahlad. But some of you may be inclined to think that after all Prahlad is not a historical personage. That story may be a mere fable. I therefore propose to give you this evening a living instance, living in the sense that it has happened within recent memory. The authoress is dead. The name of the heroine is Valli-amma. She was born in South Africa of Indian parents. She in common with many of our country-women in South Africa, joined the Satyagraha struggle that was raging there and that raged there for over 8 years. She had a faith so absolute in the triumph of the spirit over matter that you and I are not privileged to possess. She knew nothing of the intricacies of the laws that we resisted in that country. It was enough for her that thousands of her country-men and country-women were suffering for some thing she did not know, but she knew, she realised instinctively that out of the travail of the soul is a nation born and so she voluntarily suffered the hardships of a South African prisoner. She was 18 years old. In a weakly body she held a spirit that was indomitable. She got daily typhoid fever, whilst she was in jail. Her friends in the prison suggested that she should pay the fine to pay which she had the option, but she resolutely declined to pay the fine. She preferred to die in the prison, but she did not die. She was discharged in an ailing condition. She was discharged after she had completed the full term of her imprisonment. Then a few days after her discharge she died, mourned by the whole of the Indian community of South Africa as a

heroine and martyr. Before she entered the prison gates she was a poor girl unknown to fame. To-day she has risen to one of the very best of her nation. I have come here to invite you to follow the example of that beautiful girl, Valliamma, in order that you may successfully resist this Rowlatt Legislation, and I promise that if you will approach the question with even a little of the faith of Valliamma, you will see that in a very short time these Bills are destroyed.

The Bills have violated the national conscience, and the resistance to those commands which are in violation of one's conscience is a sacred privilege and a beauty, and it is not this law or this command of the governor that we resist, but it is our duty, it is open to us to resist all his commands which are not moral commands, and when we respectfully disobey wrongful things of these Governors, we serve not only them but the whole nation. I have been asked wherever I have gone what law, what other laws shall we disobey. The only answer I am able to give you to-day is that it is open to us to disobey all the laws which do not involve any moral sanction. That being so, it is totally unnecessary for you to know what laws we shall disobey. The aim of a Satyagrahi is to invite upon his own devoted head all the suffering that he is capable of undertaking. Those of you, therefore, who disapprove of the Rowlatt Legislation and who have faith in the efficacy of Satyagraha, I have come to invite, in order that you might sign this Pledge, but I will ask you to consider a thousand times before signing the

### *Trichinopoly Speech.*

Pledge. It is no discredit to you that you do not sign the Pledge, either because you do not disapprove of the legislation or you have not got the strength and the will and it is not open to any Satyagrahi to resent to or refraining from signing the pledge. But if you once sign the Pledge, remember that even as that poor girl Valliamma is spite of her illness underwent the full term of her imprisonment, even so shall you never detract from the Pledge.

You might have seen from to-day's papers received here that I have addressed to the Press a letter embodying some suggestions. I will, however, repeat them this evening. My first suggestion is, that on Sunday week, i.e., (6th day of April) we shall all observe a 24 hours' fast. It is a fitting preliminary for Satyagrahis before they commence civil disobedience of the laws. For all others it will be an expression of their deep grief over the wrong committed by the Government. I have regarded this movement as a purely religious movement and fast is an ancient institution amongst us. You will not mistake it for a hungerstrike (Laughter) nor will you consider it as designed for exerting any pressure upon the Government. It is a measure of self-discipline, it will be an expression of the anguish of the soul, and when the soul is anguished, nobody could resist. I hope that all adults will take up the task unless they are prevented from doing so by ill-health or religious conviction. I have also suggested that on that Sunday all work should be suspended, all markets and all business places should be closed. Apart from the spirit-

## TUTICORIN SPEECH

*[A public meeting was held at Tuticorin on the evening of the 28th March when a large gathering of citizens from all over the District of Tinnevely assembled at the open place near the Municipal Hospital to welcome Mr. M. K. Gandhi and to listen to his Address, Mr. Gandhi said:—]*

MR. CHAIRMAN and FRIENDS,—You will forgive me for not speaking to you standing as I am too weak to do so. Forgive me also for not being able to speak to you in Tamil. When you have learnt the “*lingua franca*,” the national language of India, that is Hindi, I shall have much pleasure in addressing you in Hindi. And it is open to all of you to avail yourselves of the opportunity now offered in Madras and other places of learning Hind. Until you do so, you really shut yourself out from the rest of India. I thank you very much for presenting this Address to me. I have come to you this evening to extend to you an invitation. This is almost the southernmost part of India. And I have been forcibly struck throughout my progress from Madras down here by the religious sentiment and the religious element predominant in these parts. This southern part of India is filled with temples in a manner in which no other part of India is.

### *Tuticorin Speech*

Untold wealth has been spent upon these marvels of architecture. And they demonstrate to me as nothing else does that we are a people deeply religious and that the people of India will be best appealed to by religion. I have come to say to you a religious sentiment. Many of us think that in the political life we need not bring the religious element at all. Some even go so far as to say that politics should have nothing to do with religion. Our past shows that we have rejected that doctrine, and we have always touched every form of activity with the religious spirit. You all know or ought to know what the Rowlatt legislation is. I therefore do not propose to occupy your time by going into the history of that legislation. It is common cause throughout the length and breadth of India that that legislation, if it remains in the Statute-Book will disgrace the whole nation. We have asked our rulers not to continue that legislation. But they have absolutely disregarded the petition. They have therefore inflicted a double wrong on the whole nation. We have seen that all our meetings, all our resolutions and all the speeches of our Councillors in the imperial Legislative Council have proved to be of practically no avail. In these circumstances what should we do? As I have already said, we must somehow or other get this legislation removed. There are two ways and only two ways open to us. One is the modern or the western method of violence upon the wrong-doers. I hold that India will reject that proposition. The vast masses of India have never been taught by our religious

preceptors to resort to violence. The other method is the method known to us of old. And that is of not giving obedience to the wrongful things of the rulers but to suffer the consequences. The way of so suffering is Satyagraha. It is the way of Prahlada. And it is, I respectfully venture to suggest to you, the only way open to us. In it there is no defeat; for, we continue the battle till we die or till we obtain victory. But to-day we are moved by the spirit of scepticism. And many of us may reject the story of Prahlada as a fable. I therefore propose to give you as briefly as I can the story of modern historical Satyagrahis. I have only singled out the names of those who have died. Three of them were. Tamilians and one a Mahomadan from the Bombay Presidency. One of the Tamilians was a beautiful girl called Valliamma, eighteen years old. She was born in South Africa as were the other two lads whose names I shall presently mention to you. She went to jail, she caught typhoid fever and she declined to be released. It was through the typhoid fever that she died while she was in jail. The other two were aged 18 and 17 and they died after their discharge from their prisons. They were all born of indentured parents. They did not receive the liberal education that many of us have. They had only a hazy notion of the story of Ramayana and Mahabharata. There were in South Africa no religious teachers to instil into their minds the indomitable deeds of Prahlada. But to-day they find their names engraved among the heroes and heroines of South Africa. The

name of the fourth was Ahmed Mahomed Kantiar. He was the bravest among the brave. He was one of the truest men I have known. He was a merchant of very substantial means. When this Satyagraha battle was raging in South Africa he was in the midst of the fight. He was the President of the British Indian Association in Transvaal. He not only went to jail but he was reduced to the utmost poverty. He sacrificed every earthly possession for the sake of his own honour and that of his Motherland. He knew the force of Satyagraha. He died only a few months ago mourned by the whole of South Africa. He too, in the commonly accepted sense of the word, was an illiterate man but he had a fund of commonsense which you would not see in ordinary people. And he saw with an unerring instinct that the way to liberty lay not through violence but through self-suffering. I have no doubt that what was possible for Valliammai, Nagappan, Narayanaswami and Ahmed Mahomad is possible for every one of you to-day. I ask you in the name of these modern Satyagrahis to follow in their footsteps, sign the Satyagraha Pledge and repeal the legislation. The taking of the Pledge is a sacred act undertaken in the name of the Almighty. Whilst therefore I invite every man and woman to sign the Pledge I beseech them also to consider it deeply and a number of times before signing it. But if you do decide to sign the pledge you will see to it like Valliammai and Ahmed Mahomad to observe it as the sacrifice of your lives. The Satyagrahi when he signs



the Pledge changes his very nature. He relies solely upon the truth, which is another word for love. Before he signs the Pledge he might get irritated against those who differ from him but not so afterwards. After all we expect every one to come over to us as the struggle progresses. We shall succeed in doing so if we are not bitter against them but are perfectly loving and respectful. You will have seen in the papers that I have made three definite suggestions in order to start my campaign. The adoption of my suggestions will also mark the religious character of the movement. The first suggestion is that on the 6th of April which is a Sunday, we should observe a fast. The second suggestion is that we should all suspend our ordinary business for the day. Those who are employed if they are called upon even to work on Sundays, should cease work after receiving due permission. The two suggestions are of universal application and take in also public servants. The third suggestion is to hold in every hamlet of India public meeting protesting, against the Rowlatt legislation, and asking the Secretary of State for India to repeal that legislation. All the suggestions are designed by way of self-denial, self-discipline and education. In the fast we expect our women, our servants and every one to join us. If you accept my humble suggestions I hope you will carry them out in the spirit in which I have said them. You have kindly refrained from applauding, whilst we are making a noisy demonstration while I have been speaking, out of regard for my health I ask you to transfer

### *Tuticorin Speech.*

that regard to all Satyagrahis. If you will not divert your attention by applading or crying "shame, shame," or "hear, hear" you will concentrate better on the topic before you. You will not also disturb the thought of any person speaking. I would even go so far to suggest that in all our meetings whether of Satyagrahis or otherwise there should not be this new fangled demonstration. But whether you accept my advice as of universal application or no, I hope that you will accept it so far as Satyagrahi meetings are concerned. The only weapon before us is to rely upon truth and self-sacrifice. I hope you will always rely upon that and that alone. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving me such a patient hearing. And I pray to God that He will give you strength to carry on the mission that we have undertaken.

## NEGAPATAM SPEECH

*[Mr. M. K. Gandhi arrived at Negapatam on the morning of the 29th March. At 4-30 p.m.; there was a monster meeting in the Nazir Gardens. The Streets were gay with festoons and flowers in honour of his visit and the gathering numbered about ten thousand, Mr. Gandhi addressed the audience as follows :—]*

Mr. Chairman and Friends,—I must once more ask forgiveness that I cannot speak standing, being too weak to do so. I am sorry also that I cannot address you in beautiful Tamil. I am sorry that the majority of you do not know Hindi, to enable me to speak in the National language. I thank you for the beautiful address presented to me this afternoon and my sence would have been still more warm if your address had been written in Tamil. ' You may have given me an English or ' Hindi translation or I would certainly have the address translated for me. I do hope that when the next occasion arises, no matter who the visitor may be, you will recognise the dignity of your own mother-tongue.

I have come here principally on the invitation of the " Labourers ' Union." I understand, too, that the major

ity of this meeting are labourers. The others therefore will forgive me while I say a few words specially addressed to the labourers. Practically the whole of my life has been passed among labourers. I know something about Labour problems. I hope, I fully realise, the dignity of labour. I hope too, that those who are guiding the great labour movement in this important War will enable the labourers to appreciate the dignity of labour. Labourers are not the least important among the citizens of India. Indeed, if we include the peasantry, they by far, form the vast majority. It is but a truism when I say that the future of India and for that matter of any country depends more upon the classes. It is therefore necessary that the labourers should recognise their own status in society. And it is necessary also that the classes who are instructors of the masses should recognise their obligations towards the masses. Also, in our own system we see many defects and it is my firm conviction that our system will not allow of the struggle of existence that is going on in the West between labour and capital. In the West practically, capital and labour are opposite interest. Each distrusts the other. It was not so in ancient India, and I am glad the leaders of the Labour Movement here had not introduced the Western form of agitation between capital and labour. They would teach the labourer they are in no way slave of Capital and they would hold themselves. There is only one occasion to be given in asking the labourers to understand and recognise that they, after all, are the

predominant power and the predominant partners and they should recognise their strength. That they should know that labour without capital is entirely useless. That is to say, large organisations in India would be utterly impossible without adequate capital. They should therefore recognise their obligations to Capital. The labourers are going to play an important part in the future. Taking India, it is not enough that they regulate their own in a satisfactory manner. They must therefore look beyond the concerns of their Unions. They should understand that they are after all part of the larger homes. It adds to their dignity when they understand that they are members and citizens of the Empire and if you only do so you will also end to understand the National activities.

### ROWLATT BILLS

Of one such activity I propose to take a brief description this afternoon, you may know, that the Government have just now embarked upon a piece of legislation which I hold and the country holds to be most hurtful to the Nation. It is the duty of every one of us whether we belong to the class, whether we are men or women to understand this legislation that may be passed by the Rulers. I hope, therefore, that the Leaders of the masses will go amongst the masses and inform them of what this legislation is. It is but natural and necessary that the hurtful legislation should be removed. We have therefore to so act as to enable us to secure the removal of this legislation. We have held meetings all over India, we

have passed resolutions and have appealed to the Viceroy to remove this legislation: but all these appeals have fallen upon deaf ears. Our Governors have therefore done double wrong, in that they are making a piece of harmful legislation and they have flouted the public opinion. When people are hurt and become angry, and do not believe even God, they take up arms and fight with the wrong doer. That is the doctrine of violence. As a whole, India has not adopted that doctrine. India has therefor believed in God and His righteousness and therefore in our hour of trial we have depended upon God. It is part of our duty to obey the wrong doer when he inflicts unjust things upon us. But we must resist them in the manner Prahlada resisted, in the penalty for disobedience. So should we do in the present instance, with measures contrary to the method of violence. It is called "Satyagraha". It is the doctrine of same suffering in which there is therefore no feat. Our countrymen in South Africa when they were labouring, copied these examples with the results you probably know. In that movement all joined hands but the majority were the common people. There were two beautiful boys and one beautiful girl in South Africa who lost their lives for the cause of National Honour. You should know because they had sacred aims, they are remembered from day to day so long as this struggle lasts and even after. The girl's name is Velliya-mmai, the boys' names are Nagappan and Narayanasami. They were about 15 years old and they were drawn from the labouring classes. They did not receive liberal

education nor had they read the deeds of "Ramayana" and "Mahabharata"—Indian blood forced through the veins. The law of suffering was engraved upon their hearts and I ask every one present here to copy the example of these two heroes and one heroine. If you and I are in suffering, if our properties are taken away from us, no matter for we preserve our dignity and National honor. You will learn more of this struggle from the leaders here. As this is purely a religious struggle we propose to make a beginning next Sunday week, the 6th day of April. I have suggested all men, women, bourgeois and moneyed men and every one who has Indian blood in him should fast for 24 hours from the last night's meal. We begin our civil disobedience and it is purely a religious one. This fast is not a show but a sincere prayer to the Almighty that we may receive proper strength and proper wisdom in going through these struggles. I have also suggested that we should stop all business and work for that day. I hope that our merchant friends will fall in with this plan. If there are any labourers who are called upon to work on Sundays they will cease work only if they receive permission from their masters. It is not part of civil disobedience that we should disobey our employers' just order. We should hold meetings on that day and proceedings should be sent to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State to remove this objectionable legislation. It will not be an idle prayer but it is by the force of "Satyagraha" and I assure you that if many of us approach

### *Negapatam Speech.*

this struggle in a proper and becoming spirit, we can have the legislation destroyed in a short space of time.

I thank you sincerely for inviting me to Negapatam. I thank you also for giving me a patient hearing. I cannot find sufficient words to describe the great affection that has been poured upon me throughout the Madras Presidency. I learnt in South Africa, to have boundless faith in the Indians. More than any other part of India you have preserved the National traditions in a superior manner. You have preserved most decidedly to the outward form. You have also the faith in Divinity. When I look at you, my mind reminds me of our great Rishis. I am sure they could not have lived simpler lives, but one thing is simple. You have to dream into the form that you have so beautifully preserved, the spirit of the Rishis. Then you will be a power in the land and you will preserve the dignity of the Nation and realise her future destiny. I hope that God will give you sufficient strength for this.



## SATYAGRAHA DAY IN MADRAS

*[Under the auspices of the Madras Satyagraha Sabha, a public meeting was held at the Triplicane Beach on 30th March to explain the message of Mr. M. K. Gandhi for the observance of the Satyagraha Day :—]*

I am sorry that I shall not be with you for this evening's meeting, as I must take the train for Bezwada in order to keep my engagement with our Andhra friends. But before my departure, I would like to reduce to writing my impressions of the tour through the southern part of the Presidency, which I have just completed, and to answer some criticism and some doubts that have been offered by friends.

I have visited Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Madura, Tuticorin and Negapatam; and taking the lowest estimate, the people addressed must have been not less than thirty thousand. Those who have a right to give us warning, to express misgivings and who have just as great a love of the Motherland as we claim to have, have feared the danger that however well-meaning we may be, and however anxious we may be to avoid violence, the people who may join the movement under an enthusiastic impulse may not be able to exercise sufficient self-control

### *Satyāgraha day in Madras.*

and break out into violence, resulting in needless loss of life, and, what is more, injury to the National cause. After embarking upon the movement, I began addressing meetings with Delhi. I passed then through Lucknow, Allahabad, Bombay, and thence to Madras. My experience of all these meetings show that the advent of Satyagraha has already altered the spirit of those who attend the Satyagraha meetings. In Lucknow, upon an innocent remark by the chairman as to the Manifesto signed by some of the members of the Imperial Legislative Council disapproving of our movement, the audience cried out 'shame, shame!' I drew their attention to the fact that Satyagrahis and those who attended Satyagraha meetings should not use such expressions and that the speeches at our meetings ought not to be punctuated with either marks of disapproval or of approval. The audience immediately understood the spirit of my remarks and never afterwards made any demonstration of their opinion. In the towns of this Presidency as elsewhere, whilst it is true that the large crowds have refrained from any noisy demonstration out of regard for my health, they have fully understood the necessity of refraining from it on the higher ground. The leaders in the movement have also fully understood the necessity for self-restraint. These experiences of mine fill me with the greatest hope for the future. I never had any apprehensions of the danger our friends feared and the various meetings I have described confirm my optimism

but I would venture further to state that every precaution that is humanly possible is being and will be taken to avert any such danger. It is for that reason that our Pledge commits the signatories to a breach of those laws that may be selected for the purpose by a Committee of Satyagrahis, and I am glad that our Sind friends have understood their Pledge and obeyed the prohibition of the Hyderabad Commissioner of Police to hold their inoffensive procession, for it is no part of the present movement to break all the laws of the land the breach of which is not inconsistent with the Pledge: A Satyagrahi is nothing if not instinctively law-abiding, and it is his law-abiding nature which exacts from him implicit obedience to the highest law that is the voice of conscience which overrides all other laws. His civil disobedience even of certain laws is only seeming disobedience. Every law gives the subject an option either to obey the primary sanction or the secondary, and I venture to suggest that the Satyagrahi by inviting the secondary sanction obeys the law. He does not act like the ordinary offender who not only commits a breach of the laws of the land whether good or bad but wishes to avoid the consequences of that breach. It will seem, therefore, that every thing that prudence may dictate has been done to avoid any untoward results. Some friends have said: "We understand your breach of the Rowlatt legislation but as a Satyagrahi there is nothing for you in it to break. How can you however break the other laws which you have hitherto obeyed and which

### *Satyagraha day in Madras.*

may also be good?" So far as good laws are concerned, that is, laws which lay down moral principles, the Satyagrahi may not break them and their breach is not contemplated under the Pledge. But the other laws are neither good nor bad, moral or immoral. They may be useful or may even be harmful. Those laws one obeys for the supposed good Government of the country. Such laws are laws made for the purpose of revenue, or political laws creating statutory offences. Those laws enable the Government to continue its power. When therefore a Government goes wrong to the extent of hurting the National fibre itself, as does the Rowlatt Legislation, it becomes the right of the subject, indeed it is his duty, to withdraw his obedience to such laws to the extent it may be required in order to bend the Government to the National will. A doubt has been expressed during my tour and my friends have written to me as to the validity in terms of Satyagraha of the entrustment of the selection of the laws for breach to a Committee. For it is argued that it amounts to a surrender of one's conscience to leave such selection to other. This doubt misunderstands the Pledge. A signatory of the Pledge undertakes, so far as he is concerned, to break if necessary all the laws which it would be lawful for the Satyagrahi to break. It is not however obligatory on him to break all such laws. He can therefore perfectly conscientiously leave the selection of the laws to be broken to the judgment of those who are experts in the matter and who in their turn are

necessarily subject to the limitations imposed by the Pledge. The worst that can happen to any signatory is that the selection may not be exhaustive enough for him.

I have been told that I am diverting the attention of the country from the one and only thing that matters, namely, the forthcoming reforms. In my opinion the Rowlatt legislation, in spite of the amendments which as the Select Committee very properly says does not affect its principles blocks the way to progress and therefore to attainment of substantial reforms. To my mind the first thing needful is to claim a frank and full recognition of the principle that public opinion properly expressed shall be respected by the Government. I am no believer in the doctrine that the same power can at the same time trust and distrust, grant liberty and repress it. I have a right to interpret the coming reforms by the light that the Rowlatt legislation throws upon them, and I make bold to promise that if we do not gather sufficient force to remove from our path this great obstacle in the shape of the Rowlatt legislation, we shall find the reforms to be a whitened sepulchre. Yet another objection to answer. Some friends have argued: "Your Satyagraha movement only accentuates the fear we have of the onrush of Bolshevism." The fact, however, is that if anything can possibly prevent this calamity descending upon our country. it is Satyagraha. Bolshevism is the necessary result of modern materialistic civilisation. Its insensate worship of matter has given rise to a school

*Satyagraha day in Madras.*

which has been brought up to look upon materialistic advancement as the goal and which has lost all touch with the final things of life. Self-indulgence is the Bolshevic creed, self-restraint is the Satyagraha creed. If I can but induce the Nation to accept Satyagraha if only as a predominant factor in life, whether social or political, we need have no fear of the Bolshevic propaganda. In asking the Nation to accept Satyagraha. I am asking for the introduction in reality of nothing new. I have coined a new word for an ancient law that has hitherto mainly governed our lives, and I do prophesy that if we disobey the law of the final supremacy of the spirit over matter, of liberty and love over brute force, in a few years time we shall have Bolshevism rampant in in this land which was once so holy.

## MESSAGE TO SATYAGRAHIS

[*Mr. Gandhi sent the following message from Bombay to Mr. S. Kasturiranga Iyengar, Editor of the "Hindu," Madras. April 3, 1919.*]

Just arrived, having missed connection at Secunderabad.

Regarding the meeting at Delhi, I hope that the Delhi Tragedy will make Satyagrahis steel their hearts and the waverers to reconsider their position. I have no shadow of doubt that, by remaining true to the Pledge, we shall not only secure the withdrawal of the Rowlatt Legislation, but we shall kill spirit of terrorism lying behind.

I hope the speeches on Sunday, the 6th April, will be free from anger or unworthy passion. The cause is too great and sacred to be damaged by exhibition of passion. We have no right to cry out against sufferings self-invited. Undoubtedly there should be no coercion or the suspension of business or for fast.

## THE DELHI INCIDENT

[*Mr. M. K. Gandhi sent the following letter to the Press from Bombay 1th April, 1919 :—*]

It is alleged against the Delhi people assembled at the Delhi Railway Station (1) that some of them were trying to coerce sweetmeat sellers into closing their stalls; (2) that some were forcibly preventing people from plying tramcars and other vehicles; (3) that some of them threw brickbats; (4) that whole crowd that marched to the Station demanded the release of men who were said to be coercers and who were for that reason arrested at the instance of the railway authorities; (5) that the crowd declined to disperse when the Magistrate gave orders to disperse. I have read Sanyasi Swami Shradhanandji's account of the tragedy. I am bound to accept it as true, unless it is authoritatively proved to be otherwise and his account seems to me to deny the allegations, 1, 2 and 3. But assumming the truth of all allegations it does appear to me that the local authorities in Delhi have made use of a Nasmyth hammer to crush a fly. On their action, however, in firing on the crowd, I shall seek another opportunity of saying more. My purpose in writing this letter is



merely to issue a note of warning to all Satyagrahis. I would, therefore, like to observe that the conduct described in the allegations 1 to 4, if true, would be inconsistent with the satyagraha Pledge. The conduct described in allegations can be consistent with the Pledge, but if the allegation is true, the conduct was premature, because the Committee, contemplated in the pledge, has not decided upon the disobedience of orders that may be issued by the Magistrates under the Riot Act. I am anxious to make it as clear as I can that in this movement no pressure can be put upon people who do not wish to accept our suggestions and advice, the movement being essentially one to secure the greatest freedom for all Satyagrahis cannot forcibly demand release of those who might be arrested, whether justly or unjustly. The essence of the Pledge is to invite imprisonment and until the Committee decides upon the breach of the Riot Act, it is the duty of Satyagrahis to obey, without making the slightest ado, Magisterial orders to disperse, etc., and thus to demonstrate their law-abiding nature. I hope that the next Sunday at Satyagraha meetings, all speeches will be free from passion, anger or resentment. The movement depends for its success entirely upon perfect self-possession, self-restraint, absolute adherence to truth and unlimited capacity for self-suffering. Before closing this letter, I would add that in opposing the Rowlatt Legislation Satyagrahis are resisting the spirit of terrorism which lies behind it and of which it is a most glaring symptom. The Delhi tragedy imposes an

*The Delhi Incident.*

added responsibility upon Satyagrahis of stilling their hearts and going on with their struggle until the Rowlatt Legislation is withdrawn.

## MESSAGE TO MADRAS SATYAGRAHIS

*[The following message from Mr. Gandhi was read at the great meeting in Madras held on the Satyagraha Day on 6th April :—]*

I do hope that the Presidency that produced beautiful Valliamma, Nagappan, Narayanaswami and so many others of your Presidency with whom I was privileged to work in South Africa will not quail in the presence of sacrifice demanded of us all. I am convinced that reforms will be of no avail, unless our would-be partners respect us. And we know that they only respect those who are capable of sacrificing for ideals, as themselves. See how unstintingly they poured out treasure and blood during the War. Ours is a nobler cause and our means infinitely superior, in that we refrain from shedding blood, other than our own.

## MESSAGE TO THE BOMBAY CITIZENS

*[At the Satyagraha Demonstrations in Bombay on 6th April, Mr. Gandhi referred to the Delhi incident and pointed out :—]*

We have two authoritative versions of 'the episode. One was Swami Shradhanandji's stating the peoples' version, and the other was Government's justifying the action of the local authorities. The two did not tally ; they differed as to some main particulars. An impartial observer will regard both as partial statements. I beg of the popular party to assume for purposes of criticism the truth of the official narrative, but there are remarkable gaps in it amounting to the evasion of charges made against the local authorities by Sanyasi Shradhanandji. His statement was the first in the field, and he was on the scene immediately after the shooting incident, near the Railway Station. If the Government have sought the co-operation of the National Leaders to regulate the crowd there would not have been any need for the display or use of Military force. Even if the official version was correct, there was no justification to fire on the innocent people. The people were entirely unarmed, and at the worst what would they have done? In any

other place but India the Police would have been deemed sufficient to meet an emergency of the Delhi type, armed with nothing more than batons. He related how in 1897, at Durban, a mob of 6,000 Europeans bent upon lynching an innocent victim threatened the destruction of property worth £20,000, including the lives of nearly twenty men, women and children, and how a dozen Police, though they would have been justified in calling Military aid, contended with the crowd themselves and succeeded in peacefully dispersing it. The Delhi crowd had no such intention of hurting any body. It threatened to do nothing except, as alleged, it refused to disperse. The authorities could have peacefully regulated the crowd; instead they followed the customary practice of calling the Military on the slightest pretext. He did not want to labour on the point. It was enough the crowd hurt nobody and were neither overawed nor infuriated. It was a remarkable incident that the people were sufficiently firm and self-possessed to hold a mass meeting of 40,000 after the shooting incidents, and it covered the Delhi people with glory. He has always emphasised that the people who took part in the struggle against the Rowlatt Act will be self-possessed and peaceful, but he has never said that the people will not have to suffer. Mr. Gandhi further said that to the Satyagrahis such suffering must be welcome. The sterner they were the better. They have undertaken to suffer unto death. Sanyasi Shradhanandji has wired saying that 4 Mahommadans and 5 Hindus have so far died, and that

*Message to the Bombay Citizens.*

about 20 people were missing and 13 persons were in the hospital, being badly wounded. For Satyagrahis it was not a bad beginning. No country had ever risen, no nation had ever been made without sacrifice, and we were trying an experiment of building up ourselves by self-sacrifice without resorting to violence in any shape or form. That was a Satyagrahi. From Satyagraha standpoint the peoples' case in Delhi was weak, in that the crowd refused to disperse when asked to do so, and demanded the release of the two arrested men. Both acts were wrong. It was arrest and imprisonment they sought for by resorting to civil disobedience. In this movement it was open to Satyagrahis to disobey only those laws which are selected by the Committee contemplated in the Pledge. Before being able to offer effective civil disobedience, we must acquire habits of discipline, self-control and qualities of leadership and obedience. Till the qualities were developed and till the spirit of Satyagrahis has permeated large bodies of men and women, Mr. Gandhi said he had advised that only such laws as can be individually disobeyed should be selected for disobedience, as, while disobeying certain selected laws, it was incumbent on the people to show their law-abiding character by respecting all the other laws.

## PROHIBITED LITERATURE ITS DISTRIBUTION.

*[The Satyagraha Committee advised that for the time being laws regarding prohibited literature and registration of Newspapers may be civilly disobeyed. Accordingly Mr. Gandhi, President, and Secretaries of the Satyagraha Sabha, Bombay, issued on April 7 the following notice to organise, regulate and control the sale of these publications :—]*

Satyagrahis should receive copies of prohibited literature for distribution. A limited number of copies can be had from the Secretaries of the Satyagraha Sabha. Satyagrahis should, so far as possible, write their names and addresses as sellers so that they may be traced easily when wanted by the Government for prosecution. Naturally, there can be no question of secret sale of this literature. At the same time, there should be no forwardness either in distributing it. It is open to Satyagrahis to form small groups of men and women to whom they may read this class of literature. The object in selecting prohibited literature is not merely to commit a civil breach of the law regarding it but it is also to supply people with clean literature of a high moral value. It is

### *Prohibited Literature, its Distribution.*

expected that the Government will confiscate such. Satyagrahis have to be as independent of finance as possible. When therefore copies are confiscated, Satyagrahis are requested to make copies of prohibited literature themselves or by securing the assistance of willing friends and to make use of it until it is confiscated by giving readings to the people from it. It is stated that such readings would amount to dissemination of prohibited literature. When whole copies are exhausted by dissemination or confiscation, Satyagrahis may continue civil disobedience by writing out and distributing extracts from accessible books.

### CIRCULATING UNREGISTERED NEWSPAPERS.

Regarding the civil breach of the law governing the publication of newspapers the idea is to publish in every Satyagraha centre a written newspaper without registering it. It need not occupy more than one side of half a foolscap. When such a newspaper is edited it will be found how difficult it is to fill up half a sheet. It is a well known fact that a vast majority of newspapers contain much padding. Further, it cannot be denied that newspaper articles written under the terror of the very strict newspaper law have a double meaning. A Satyagrahi for whom punishments provided by law have lost all terror can give only in an unregistered newspapers his thoughts and opinion unhampered by any other consideration than that of his own conscience. His newspaper therefore, if otherwise well edited, can become a



most powerful vehicle for transmitting pure ideas in a concise manner, and there need be no fear of inability to circulate a hand-written newspaper, for it will be the duty of those who may receive the first copies to recopy till at last the process of multiplication is made to cover if necessary the whole of the masses of India and it must not be forgotten that we have in India the tradition of imparting instruction by oral teaching.

## MESSAGE AFTER ARREST

*[Mr. Gandhi was arrested at Kosi on his way to Delhi on the morning of the 10th April and served with an order not to enter the Punjab and the District of Delhi and to restrict himself to the Bombay Presidency. The officer serving the order treated him most politely, assuring him it would be his most painful duty to arrest him, if he elected to disobey, but that there would be no ill-will between them. Mr. Gandhi smilingly said that he must elect to disobey as it was his duty, and that the officer ought also to do what his duty was. Mr. Gandhi then dictated the following message to Mr. Desai, his Secretary, the following message laying special emphasis on his oral message that none shall resent his arrest or do anything tainted with untruth or violence which is sure to draw the secret cause.]*

To my countrymen. It is a matter of the highest satisfaction to me, as I hope to you, that I have received an order from the Punjab Government not to enter that Province and another from the Delhi Government not to enter Delhi, while an order of the Government of India has been served on me immediately later which restricts me to Bombay. I had no hesitation in saying to the

officer, who served the order on me, that I was bound in virtue of the pledge to disregard it, which I have done, and I shall presently find myself a free man, my body being taken by them in their custody. It was galling to me to remain free whilst the Rowlatt Legislation disfigured the Statute Book. My arrest makes me free. It now remains for you to do your duty, which is clearly stated in the Satyagraha pledge. Follow it, and you will find it will be your *Kamadhenu*. I hope there will be no resentment about my arrest. I have received what I was seeking either withdrawal of the Rowlatt Legislation or imprisonment. A departure from truth by a hair's breadth, or violence committed against anybody, whether Englishman or Indian, will surely damage great cause the Satyagrahis are handling. I hope the Hindu-Muslim unity, which seems now to have taken firm hold of the people, will become a reality and I feel convinced that it will only be a reality if the suggestions I have ventured to make in my communication to the Press are carried out. The responsibility of the Hindus in the matter is greater than that of Muhammadans, they being in a minority and I hope they will discharge their responsibility in the manner worthy of their country. I have also made certain suggestions regarding the proposal of the Swadeshi vow. Now I commend them to your serious attention and you will find that as your ideas of Satyagraha become matured the Hindu-Muslim unity is but parts of Satyagraha. Finally it is my firm belief that we shall obtain salvation only through suffering and not

*Message after Arrest.*

by reforms dropping on us from England, no matter how unstintingly they might be granted. The English are a great Nation, but the weaker also go to the wall if they come in contact with them. When they are themselves courageous they have borne untold sufferings and they only respond to courage and sufferings and partnership with them is only possible after we have developed an indomitable courage and a faculty for unlimited suffering. There is a fundamental difference between their civilisation and ours. They believe in the doctrine of violence or brute force as the final arbiter. My reading of our civilisation is that we are expected to believe in Soul Force or Moral Force as the final arbiter and this is Satyagraha. We are groaning under sufferings which we would avoid if we could, because we have swerved from the path laid down for us by our ancient civilisation. I hope that the Hindus, Muhammadans, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, Jews and all who are born in India or who made India their land of adoption will fully participate in these National observances and I hope too that women will take therein as full a share as the men.

## THE "SATYAGRAHI"

*[The unregistered newspaper, the "Satyagrahi" with Mr. Gandhi as Editor was brought out in Bombay on the 7th April in defiance of the Press Act was only a small sheet of paper sold for one price. It stated among other things: "The editor is liable at any moment to be arrested, and it is impossible to ensure the continuity of publication until India is in a happy position of supplying editors enough to take the place of those who are arrested. It is not our intention to break for all time the laws governing the publication of newspapers. This paper will, therefore, exist so long only as the Rowlatt Legislation is not withdrawn" It contained the following instructions to Satyagrahis:—]*

We are now in a position to expect to be arrested at any moment. It is, therefore, necessary to bear in mind that if any one is arrested, he should, without causing any difficulty, allow himself to be arrested, and, if summoned to appear before a Court, he should do so. No defence should be offered and no pleaders engaged in the matter. If a fine is imposed with the alternative of imprisonment, the imprisonment should be accepted. If only fine is imposed, it ought not to be paid; but his

### *The "Satyagraha":*

property, if he has any, should be allowed to be sold. There should be no demonstration of grief or otherwise made by the remaining Satyagrahis by reason of the arrest and imprisonment of their comrade. It cannot be too often repeated that we court imprisonment, and we may not complain of it when we actually receive it. When once imprisoned, it is our duty to conform to all prison regulations, as prison reform is no part of our campaign at the present moment. A Satyagrahi may not resort to surreptitious practices. All that the Satyagrahis do can only and must be done openly.

## SATYAGRAHA AND DURAGRAHA.

*On the afternoon of the 11th April Mr. Gandhi arrived in Bombay having been prevented from entering the province of Punjab and Delhi. An order was soon after served on him requiring him to confine his activities within the limits of the Bombay Presidency. Having heard of the riots and the consequent bloodshed in different places he caused the following message to be read at all the meetings that evening :—*

I have not been able to understand the cause of so much excitement and disturbance that followed my detention. It is not Satyagraha. It is worse than Duragraha. Those who join Satyagraha demonstrations were bound one and all to refrain at all hazard from violence, not to throw stones or in any way whatever to injure anybody.

But in Bombay we have been throwing stones. We have obstructed tramcars by putting obstacles in the way. This is not Satyagraha. We have demanded the release of about 50 men who had been arrested for deeds of violence. Our duty is chiefly to get ourselves arrested for deeds of violence. Our duty is chiefly to get ourselves arrested. It is breach of religious duty to

## *Satyagraha and Duragraha.*

endeavour to secure the release of those who have committed deeds of violence. We are not therefore justified on any grounds whatever in demanding the release of those who have been arrested. I have been asked whether a Satyagrahi is responsible for the results that follow from that movement. I have replied that they are. I therefore suggest that if we cannot conduct this movement without the slightest violence from our side the movement might have to be abandoned or it may be necessary to give it a different and still more restricted shape. It may be necessary to go even further. The time may come for me to offer Satyagraha against ourselves. I would not deem it a disgrace that we die. I shall be pained to hear of the death of a Satyagrahi, but I shall consider it to be the proper sacrifice given for the sake of struggle. But if those who are not Satyagrahis who shall not have joined the movement, who are even against the movement, received any injury at all, every Satyagrahi will be responsible for that sinful injury. My responsibility will be a million times heavier. I have embarked upon the struggle with a due sense of responsibility.

I have just heard that some English gentlemen have been injured. Some may even have died from such injuries. If so, it would be a great blot on Satyagraha. For me, Englishmen too are our brethren. We can have nothing against them and for me since such as I have described are simply unbearable, but I know how to offer Satyagraha against ourselves. As against ourselves what



*Mahatma Gandhi.*

kind of Satyagraha can I offer? I do not see what penance I can offer except that it is for me to fast and if need be by so doing to give up this body and thus prove the truth of Satyagraha. I appeal to you to peacefully disperse and to refrain from acts that may in any way bring disgrace upon the people of Bombay.

## AHMEDABAD SPEECH.

*The following is the full text of the speech of Mr. Gandhi delivered at a meeting of the citizens of Ahmedabad held at his Ashram, Sabarmati, on Monday the 14th April, 1919,*

BROTHERS—I mean to address myself mainly to you. Brothers, the events that have happened in course of the last few days have been most disgraceful to Ahmedabad, and as all these things have happened in my name, I am ashamed of them, and those who have been responsible for them have thereby not honoured me but disgraced me. A rapier run through my body could hardly have pained me more. I have said times without number that Satyagraha admits of no violence, no pillage, no incendiarism; and still in the name of Satyagraha we burnt down buildings, forcibly captured weapons, extorted money, stopped trains, cut off telegraph wires, killed innocent people and plundered shops and private houses. If deeds such as these could save me from the prison house or the scaffold I should not like to be so saved. I do wish to say in all earnestness that violence has not secured my discharge. A most brutal rumour was set afloat that Anasuya Bai was

arrested. The crowds were infuriated all the more, and disturbance increased. You have thereby disgraced Anasuya Bai and under the cloak of her arrest heinous deeds have been done.

These deeds have not benefited the people in any way. They have done nothing but harm. The buildings burnt down were public property and they will naturally be rebuilt at our expense. The loss due to the shops remaining closed is also our loss. The terrorism prevailing in the city due to Martial Law is also the result of this violence. It has been said that many innocent lives have been lost as a result of the operation of Martial Law. If this is a fact then for that too the deeds described above are responsible. It will thus be seen that the events that have happened have done nothing but harm to us. Moreover they have most seriously damaged the Satyagraha movement. Had an entirely peaceful agitation followed my arrest, the Rowlatt Act would have been out or on the point of being out of the Statute Book to-day. It should not be a matter for surprise if the withdrawal of the Act is now delayed. When I was released on Friday my plan was to start for Delhi again on Saturday to seek re-arrest, and that would have been an accession of strength to the movement. Now, instead of going to Delhi, it remains to me to offer Satyagraha against our own people, and as it is my determination to offer Satyagraha even unto death for securing the withdrawal of the Rowlatt legislation, I think the occasion has arrived when I should offer Satyagraha

against ourselves for the violence that has occurred. And I shall do so at the sacrifice of my body, so long as we do not keep perfect peace and cease from violence to person and property. How can I seek imprisonment unless I have absolute confidence that we shall no longer be guilty of such errors? Those desirous of joining the Satyagraha movement or of helping it must entirely abstain from violence. They may not resort to violence even on my being rearrested or on some such events happening. Englishmen and women have been compelled to leave their homes and confine themselves to places of protection in Shahi Bag, because their trust in our harmlessness has received a rude shock. A little thinking should convince us that this is a matter of humiliation for us all. The sooner this state of things stops the better for us. They are our brethren and it is our duty to inspire them with the belief that their persons are as sacred to us as our own and this is what we call *Abhaydan*, the first requisite of true religion. Satyagraha without this is *Duragraha*.

There are two distinct duties now before us. One is that we should firmly resolve upon refraining from all violence, and the other is that we should repent and do penance for our sins. So long as we don't repent and do not realise our errors and make an open confession of them, we shall not truly change our course. The first step is that those of us who have captured weapons should surrender them. To show what we are really penitent we will contribute each of us not less than eight

annas to wards, helping the families of those who have been killed by our acts. Though no amount of money contribution can altogether undo the results of the furious deeds of the past few days, our contribution will be a slight token of our repentance. I hope and pray that no one will evade this contribution on the plea that he has had no part in those wicked acts. For if such as those who were no party to these deeds had all courageously and bravely gone forward to put down the lawlessness, the mob would have been checked in their career and would have immediately realised the wickedness of their doings. I venture to say that if instead of giving money to the mob out of fear we had rushed out to protect buildings and to save the innocent without fear of death we could have succeeded in so doing. Unless we have this sort of courage, mischief-makers will always try to intimidate us into participating in their misdeeds. Fear of death makes us devoid both of valour and religion. For want of valour is want of religious faith. And having done little to stop the violence we have been all participators in the sins that have been committed. And we ought, therefore, to contribute our mite, as a mark of our repentance. Each group can collect its own contributions and send them on to me through its collectors. I would also advise, if it is possible for you, to observe a twenty-four hours fast in slight expiation of these sins. This fast should be observed in private and there is no need for crowds to go to the bathing ghats.

### *Ahmedabad Speech.*

I have thus far drawn attention to what appears to be your duty. I must now consider my own. My responsibility is a million times greater than yours. I have placed Satyagraha before people for their acceptance, and I have lived in your midst for four years. I have also given some contribution to the special service of Ahmedabad. Its citizens are not quite unfamiliar with my views.

It is alleged that I have without proper consideration persuaded thousands to join the movement. That allegation is, I admit, true to a certain extent, but to a certain extent only. It is open to any body to say that but for the Satyagraha campaign there would not have been this violence. For this I have already done a penance, to my mind an unendurable one, namely, that I have had to postpone my visit to Delhi to seek rearrest and I have also been obliged to suggest a temporary restriction of Satyagraha to a limited field. This has been more painful to me than a wound but this penance is not enough, and I have therefore decided to fast for three days, *i.e.*, 72 hours. I hope my fast will pain no one. I believe a seventy-two hours fast is easier for me than a twenty-four hours' fast for you. And I have imposed on me a discipline which I can bear. If you really feel pity for the suffering that will be caused to me, I request that that pity should always restrain you from ever again being party to the criminal acts of which I have complained. Take it from me that we are not going to win Swarajya or benefit our country in the least by violence and terrorism. I am of opin-

ion that if we have to wade through violence to obtain Swarajya and if a redress of grievances were to be only possible by means of ill will for and slaughter of English men I for one would do without that Swarajya and without a redress of those grievances. For me life would not be worth living if Ahmedabad continues to countenance violence in the name of truth. The poet has called Gujarat the "Garvi" (Great and Glorious) Gujarat. The Ahmedabad its capital is the residence of many religious Hindus and Muhammadans. Deeds of public violence in a city like this is like an ocean being on fire. Who can quench that fire? I can only offer myself as a sacrifice to be burnt in that fire, and I therefore ask you all to help in the attainment of the result that I desire out of my fast. May the love that lured you into unworthy acts awaken you to a sense of the reality, and if that love does continue to animate you, beware that I may not have to fast myself to death.

It seems that the deeds I have complained of have been done in an organised manner. There seems to be a definite design about them, and I am sure that there must be some educated and clever man or men behind them. They may be educated, but their education has not enlightened them. You have been misled into doing these deeds by such people. I advise you never to be so misguided, and I would ask them seriously to reconsider their views. To them and to you I commend my book "Hind Swarajya" which as I understand may be printed and published without infringing the law thereby.

*Ahmedabad Speech.*

Among the millhands the spinners have been on strike for some days. I advise them to resume work immediately and to ask for increase if they want any only after resuming work, and in a reasonable manner. To resort to the use of force to get any increase is suicidal. I would specially advise all millhands to altogether eschew violence. It is their interest to do so and I remind them of the promises made to Anasuya Bai and me that they would ever refrain from violence. I hope that all will now resume work.



## TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF THE MOVEMENT

. *The following speech advising temporary suspension of the Satyagraha movement was read at Bombay the 18th April.*

It is not without sorrow I feel compelled to advise the temporary suspension of civil disobedience. I give this advice not because I have less faith now in its efficacy but because I have, if possible, greater faith than before. It is my perception of the law of *Satyagraha* which impels me to suggest the suspension. I am sorry when I embarked upon a mass movement, I underrated the forces of evil and I must now pause and consider how best to meet the situation. But whilst doing so I wish to say that from a careful examination of the tragedy at Ahmedabad and Viramgaum I am convinced that *Satyagraha* had nothing to do with the violence of the mob and that many swarmed round the banner of mischief raised by the mob largely because of their affection for Anasuya Bai and myself. Had the Government in an unwise manner not prevented me from entering Delhi and so compelled me to disobey their orders I feel certain that Ahmedabad and Viramgaum would

### *Temporary Suspension of the Movement.*

have remained free from the horrors of the last week. In other words *Satyagraha* has neither been the cause nor the occasion of the upheaval. If anything, the presence of *Satsugraha* has acted as a check ever so slight upon the previously existing lawless elements.

As regards events in the Punjab, it is admitted that they are unconnected with the *Satyagraha* movement. In the course of the *Satyagra* struggle in South Africa several thousands of Indentured Indians had struck work. This was *Satyagraha* strike and, therefore, entirely peaceful and voluntary. Whilst the strike was going on, a strike of European miners, railway employees, etc, was declared. Overtures were made to me to make common cause with the European strikers. As a *Satyagrahi* I did not require a moment's consideration to decline to do so. I went further, and for fear of our strike being classed with the strike of European in which methods of violence and use of arms found a prominent place ours was suspended and *Satyagraha* from that movement came to be recognised by the Europeans of South Africa as an honourable and honest movement in the words of General Smutts, a constitutional movement. I can do no less at the present critical moment. I would be untrue to *Satyagraha* if I allowed it by any action of mine to be used as an occasion for feeding violence, for embittering relations between the English and the Indians. Our *Satyagraha* must, therefore, now consist in ceaselessly helping the authorities in all the ways available to us as *Satyagrahis* to restore order and

to curb lawlessness. We can turn the tragedies going on before us to good account if we could but succeed in gaining the adherence of the masses to the fundamental principles of *Satyagraha*. *Satyagraha* is like a banian tree with innumerable branches. Civil disobedience is one such branch *Satya* (truth) and *Ahimsa* (non-violence) together make the parent trunk from which all innumerable branches shoot out. We have found by bitter experience that whilst in an atmosphere of lawlessness civil disobedience found ready acceptance, *Satya* (truth) and *Ahimsa* (non-violence) from which alone civil disobedience can worthily spring, have commanded little or no respect. Ours then is a herculean task, but we may not shirk it. We must fearlessly spread the doctrine of *Satya* and *ahimsa* and then and not till then, shall we be able to undertake mass *Satyagraha*. My attitude towards the Rowlatt legislation remains unchanged. Indeed, I do feel that the Rowlatt legislation is one of the many causes of the present unrest. But in a surcharged atmosphere I must refrain from examining these causes. The main and only purpose of this letter is to advise all *Satyagrahis* to temporarily suspend civil disobedience, to give Government effective co-operation in restoring order and by preaching and practice to gain adherence to the fundamental principles mentioned above.

## THE SWADESHI VOW

### I.

*The following are translations of Mr. Gandhi's two articles on Swadeshi contributed to Vernacular papers on the day previous to that which was fixed for taking that vow in Bombay. "Bombay Chronicle":—*

Although the desire for Swadeshi animating a large number of people at the present moment is worthy of all praise, it seems to me that they have not fully realised the difficulty in the way of its observance. Vows are always taken only in respect of matters otherwise difficult of accomplishment. When after a series of efforts we fail in doing certain things, by taking a vow to do them we draw a cordon round ourselves, from which we may never be free and thus we avoid failures. Anything less than such inflexible determination cannot be called a vow. It is not a pledge or vow when we say we shall so far as possible do certain acts. If by saying that we shall, so far as we can only use Swadeshi articles, we can be deemed to have taken the Swadeshi vow, then from the Viceroy down to the labouring man very few people would be found who could not be considered to have taken the pledge, but we want to go outside this circle and aim

at a much higher goal. And there is as much difference between the act contemplated by us and the acts above described as there is between a right angle and all other angles. And if we decide to take the Swadeshi vow in this spirit it is clear that it is well nigh impossible to take an all-comprehensive vow.

After having given deep consideration to the matter for a number of years, it is sufficiently demonstrated to me that we can take the full Swadeshi vow only in respect of our clothing, whether made of cotton, silk or wool. Even in observing this vow we shall have to face many difficulties in the initial stages and that is only proper. By patronising foreign cloth we have committed a deep sin. We have abandoned an occupation which in point of Importance is second only to agriculture, and we are face to face with a total disruption of a calling to which Kabir was born and which he adorned. One meaning of the Swadeshi vow suggested by me is that in taking it we desire to do penance for our sins, that we desire to resuscitate the almost lost art of hand-weaving, and that we are determined to save our Hindustan crores of rupees which go out of it annually in exchange for the cloth we receive. Such high results cannot be attained without difficulties; there must be obstacles in the way. Things easily obtained are practically of no value, but however difficult of observance that pledge may be, some day or other there is no escape from it if we want our country to rise to its full height. And we shall then accomplish the vow when we shall deem it a

religious duty to use only that cloth which is entirely produced in the country and refrain from using any another.

### A HASTY GENERALISATION.

Friends tell me that at the present moment we have not enough Swadeshi cloth to supply our wants and that the existing mills are too few for the purpose. This appears to me to be a hasty generalisation. We can hardly expect such good fortune as to have thirty crores of covenanters for Swadeshi. A hardened optimist dare not expect more than a few lakhs and I anticipate no difficulty in providing them with Swadeshi cloth, but where there is a question of religion there is no room for thoughts of difficulties. The general climate of India is such that we require very little clothing. It is no exaggeration to say that three fourths of the middle class population use much unnecessary clothing. Moreover when many men take the vow there would be set up many spinning wheels and handlooms. India can produce innumerable weavers. They are merely awaiting encouragement. Mainly two things are needful, viz., self-denial and honesty. It is self-evident that the covenanters must possess these two qualities, but in order to enable people to observe such a great vow comparatively easily, our merchants also will need to be blessed with these qualities. An honest and self-denying merchant will spin his yarn only from Indian cotton and confine weaving only to such cotton. He will only use those dyes which are made in India. When a man desires

to do a thing he cultivates the necessary ability to remove difficulties in his path.

### DESTROY ALL FOREIGN CLOTHING

It is not enough that we manage if necessary with as little clothing as possible, but for a full observance it is further necessary to destroy all foreign clothing, in our possession. If we are satisfied that we erred in making use of foreign cloth, that we have done an immense injury to India, that we have all but destroyed the race of weavers, cloth stained with such sin is only fit to be destroyed. In this connection it is necessary to understand the distinction between Swadeshi and Boycott. Swadeshi is a religious conception. It is the natural duty imposed upon every man. The well-being of people depends upon it and the Swadeshi vow cannot be taken in a punitive or revengeful spirit. The Swadeshi vow is not derived from any extraneous happening, whereas boycott is a purely wordly and political weapon. It is rooted in ill-will and a desire for punishment; and I can see nothing but harm in the end for a nation that resorts to boycott. One who wishes to be a Satyagrahi for ever cannot participate in any boycott movement and a perpetual Satyagraha is impossible without Swadeshi. This is the meaning I have understood to be given to boycott. It has been suggested that we should boycott British goods till the Rowlatt legislation is withdrawn, and that the boycott should terminate with the removal of that legislation. In such a scheme of boycott it is open to us to take Japanese or other foreign goods even though they

## *The Swadeshi Vow.*

may be rotten. If I must use foreign goods, having political relations with England I would only take English goods and consider such conduct to be proper.

In proclaiming a boycott of British goods we expose ourselves to the charge of desiring to punish the English, but we have no quarrel with them; our quarrel is with the Governors. And, according to the law of Satyagraha we may not harbour any ill-will even against the rulers, and as we may harbour no ill-will, I cannot see the propriety of resorting to boycott.

### THE SWADESHI PLEDGE

For a complete observance of the restricted Swadeshi vow suggested above, I would advise the following text: "With God as my witness, I solemnly declare that from to-day I shall confine, myself, for my personal requirements, to the use of cloth, manufactured in India from Indian cotton, silk and wool; and I shall altogether abstain from using foreign cloth, and I shall destroy all foreign cloth in my possession."

### II.

For a proper observance of the pledge it is really necessary to use only hand woven cloth made out of handspun yarn. Imported yarn even though spun out of Indian cotton and woven in India is not Swadeshi cloth. We shall reach perfection only when our cotton is spun in India on indigenous spinning wheels and yarn so spun is woven on similarly made handlooms. But requirements of the foregoing pledge are met if we all only use cloth woven by means of imported machinery.



I may add that covenanters to the restricted Swadeshi referred to here will not rest satisfied with Swadeshi clothing only. They will extend the vow to all other things as far as possible.

### ENGLISH OWNED MILLS

I am told that there are in India English owned mills which do not admit Indian shareholders. If this information be true I would consider cloth manufactured in such mills to be foreign cloth. Moreover, such cloth bears the taint of ill-will. However well made such cloth may be it should be avoided.

Thousands of men believe that by using cloth woven in Indian mills they comply with the requirements of the Swadeshi vow. The fact is that most fine cloth is made out of foreign cotton spun outside India. Therefore the only satisfaction to be derived from the use of such cloth is that it is woven in India. Even on handlooms for very fine cloth only foreign yarn is used. The use of such cloth does not amount to an observance as Swadeshi. To say so is simple self-deception. Satyagrah, i.e., insistence on truth is necessary even in Swadeshi. When men will say, 'we shall confine ourselves to pure Swadeshi cloth, even though we may have to remain satisfied with a mere loincloth,' and when women will resolutely say, 'we shall observe pure Swadeshi even though we may have to restrict ourselves to clothing just enough to satisfy the sense of modesty,' then shall we be successful in the observance of the great Swadeshi vow. If a few thousand men and women were to take the Swadeshi

## *The Swadeshi Vow.*

vow in this spirit others will try to imitate them so far as possible. They will then begin to examine their wardrobes in the light of Swadeshi. Those who are not attached to pleasures and personal adornment, I venture to say, can give a great impetus to Swadeshi.

### KEY TO ECONOMIC SALVATION

Generally speaking there are very few villages in India without weavers. From times immemorial we have had village farmers and village weavers, as we have village carpenters, shoemakers, blacksmiths, etc., but our farmers have become poverty-sticken and our weavers have patronage only from the poor classes. By supplying them with Indian cotton spun in India we can obtain the cloth we may need. For the time being it may be coarse, but by constant endeavours we can get our weavers to weave out fine yarn and so doing we shall raise our weavers to a better status, and if we would go a step still further we can easily cross the sea of difficulties lying in our path. We can easily teach our women and our children to spin and weave cotton, and what can be purer than cloth woven in our own home? I say it from my experience that acting in this way we shall be saved from many a hardship, we shall be ridding ourselves of many an unnecessary need, and our life will be one song of joy and beauty. I always hear divine voices telling me in my ears that such life was a matter of fact once in India, but even if such an India be the idle dream of the poet, it does not matter.

Is it not necessary to create such an India now? does not our *purushārtha* lie therein? I have been travelling throughout India. I cannot bear the heart-rending cry of the poor. The young and old all tell me, 'we cannot get cheap cloth, we have not the means where with to purchase dear cloth. Everything is dear, provisions, cloth and all. What are we to do?' and they have a sign of despair. It is my duty to give these men a satisfactory reply. It is the duty of every servant of the country, but I am unable to give a satisfactory reply. It should be intolerable for all thinking Indians that our raw materials should be exported to Europe and that we have to pay heavy prices therefore. The first and the last remedy for this is *Swadeshi*. We are not bound to sell our cotton to anybody and when Hindustan rings with the echoes of *Swadeshi*, no producer of cotton will sell it for its being manufactured in foreign countries. When *Swadeshi* pervades the country every one will be set a thinking why cotton should not be refined and spun and woven in the place where it is produced, and when the *Swadeshi mantra* resounds in every ear millions of men will have in their hands the key to the economic salvation of India. Training for this does not require hundreds of years. When the religious sense is awakened people's thoughts undergo a revolution in a single moment. Only selfless sacrifice is the *sine qua non*. The spirit of sacrifice pervades the Indian atmosphere at the present moment. If we fail to preach *Swadeshi* at this supreme moment we shall have to wring

### *The Swadeshi Vow.*

our hands in despair. I beseech every Hindu, Mussalman, Sikh, Parsi, Christian and Jew who believes that he belongs to this country to take the Swadeshi vow and to ask others also to do likewise. It is my humble belief that if we cannot do even this little for our country we are born in it in vain. Those who think deep will see that such Swadeshi contains pure economics. I hope that every man and woman will give serious thought to my humble suggestion. Imitation of English economics will spell our ruin.

## APPENDIX

### INDIGO LABOUR IN BEHAR.

#### WHAT THE COMMISSIONER THOUGHT.

Copy of the letter from the Commissioner, Tirhut Division, to the District Magistrate of Champaran, dated Muzaffarpur, the 13th April, 1917 :

Sir,

Mr. M. K. Gandhi has come here in response to what he describes as an insistent public demand, to inquire into the conditions under which Indians work on indigo plantations, and desires the help of the local administration. He came to see me this morning; and I explained that relations between the planters and raiyats had engaged the attention of the administration since the sixties, and that we were particularly concerned with a phase of the problem in Champaran now; but it was doubtful whether the intervention of a stranger in the middle of our treatment of the case would not prove an embarrassment. I indicated the potentialities of disturbance in Champaran, asked for credentials to show an insistent public demand for his enquiry, and said that the matter would probably need reference to Government

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I expect that Mr. Gandhi will communicate with me again before he proceeds to Champaran, but have been informed since our interview that his object is likely to be agitation; rather than a genuine search for knowledge, and it is possible that he may proceed without further reference. I consider that there is a danger of disturbance to the public tranquillity, should he visit your district; and I have the honour to request you to direct him by an order under Sec. 144, Cr. P. C., to leave at once, if he should appear.

I have the honour to be, etc.,

(Sd.) L. F. MORSHEAD,

*Commissioner of Tirhut*

*Division.*

### MR. GANDHI'S REPLY.

Mr. Gandhi's reply to the District Magistrate, Motihari :

Sir,—With reference to the order under Sec. 144 Cr. P. C., just served upon me, I beg to state that I am sorry that you have felt called upon to issue it; and I am sorry too that the Commissioner of the Division has totally misinterpreted my position. Out of a sense of public responsibility, I feel it to be my duty to say that I am unable to leave this district, but if it so please the authorities, I shall submit to the order by suffering the penalty of disobedience.

I most emphatically repudiate the Commissioner's suggestion that "my object is likely to be agitation."

*Mahatma Gandhi*

My desire is purely and simply for "a genuine search for knowledge" and this I shall continue to satisfy so long as I am left free.

I have, etc.,

16th April, 1917.

(Sd.) M. K. GANDHI.

IN COURT

Mr. Gandhi appeared before the Deputy Magistrate on Wednesday, the 18th instant. He read the Statement printed below, and being asked to plead and finding that the case was likely to be unnecessarily prolonged, pleaded guilty. The Magistrate would not award the penalty but post-poned judgment till 3 P. M. Meanwhile, he was asked to see the Superintendent and then the District Magistrate. The result was that he agreed not to go out to the villages pending instructions from the Government as to their view of his mission. The case was then postponed up to Saturday, April 21.

MR. GANDHI'S STATEMENT

*The following is the text of Mr. Gandhi's Statement before the court.*

With the permission of the Court, I would like to make a brief statement showing why I have taken the very serious step of seemingly disobeying the order made under Sec. 144 of the Cr. P. C. In my humble opinion, it is a question of difference of opinion, between the local administration and myself. I have entered the country with motives of rendering humanitarian and national service. I have done so in response to the pressing invitation to come and help the raiyats, who urge they are

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not being fairly treated by the indigo planters. I could not render any help without studying the problem. I have therefore, come to study it with the assistance, if possible, of the administration and the planters. I have no other motive, and I cannot believe that my coming here can in any way disturb public peace or cause loss of life. I claim to have considerable experience in such matters. The administration, however, have thought differently. I fully appreciate their difficulty, and I admit too, that they can only proceed upon the information they receive. As a law-abiding citizen, my first instinct would be as it was to obey the order served upon me. I could not do so without doing violence to my sense of duty to those for whom I came. I feel that I could just now serve them only by remaining in their midst. I could not, therefore, voluntarily retire. Amidst this conflict of duty, I could only throw the responsibility of removing me from them on the administration. I am fully conscious of the fact that a person, holding in the public life of India a position such as I do, has to be most careful in setting examples. It is my firm belief that, in the complex constitution under which we are living, the safe and honourable course for a self respecting man is, in the circumstances such as that face me, to do what I have decided to do, that is, to submit without protest to the penalty of disobedience. I have ventured to make this statement not in any way in extenuation of the penalty to be awarded against me, but to show that I have disregarded



the order served upon me, not for want of respect for lawful authority, but in obedience to the higher law of our being—the voice of conscience.—*Leader.*

### **Government Committee of Enquiry.**

**MR. M. K. GANDHI TO SIT AS MEMBER**

*Bankipore, June 1917:—*

The Local Government have to-day issued a resolution regarding the appointment of a committee to enquire into the relations between landlord and tenant in the Champaran district, including all disputes arising out of the manufacture and cultivation of indigo. The committee, as was stated in a previous message, is fully representative, appointed with the approval of the Government of India and consists of the following:—  
President: Mr. F. G. Sly, Commissioner, Central Provinces; Members: Mr. L. G. Adami, Legal Remembrancer, Behar and Orissa, the Hon. Raja Harihar Prashad Narayan Singh, a landlord, the Hon. Mr. D. J. Reich a member of the planting community, Mr. G. Rainy, Deputy Secretary, Finance Department, Government of India, who had been in the Champaran District formerly and Mr. M. K. Gandhi. Secretary; Mr. E. L. Tanner, Settlement Officer, South Behar. Mr. Tanner, it may be stated, was the Sub-Divisional Officer of Bettiah, when indigo riots broke out in that sub-division in 1908.

The committee's duty will also be to examine the evidence on those subjects already available, supplementing it by such further enquiry, local and otherwise,

as they may consider desirable, and to report their conclusions to the Government, stating the measures they recommend in order to remove any abuse or grievances, which they may find to exist. The Lieut. Governor in Council has left a free hand to the Committee as to the procedure they will adopt in arriving at the facts. The committee will assemble about the 12th July and will it is hoped, complete their labours within three months.

### GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION

The resolution, appointing this Committee, says:—  
On various occasions during the past fifty years, the relations of landlords and tenants and the circumstances, attending the growing of indigo in the Champaran District, have been the cause of considerable anxiety. The condition under which indigo was cultivated when the industry was flourishing, required readjustment when it declined simultaneously with a general rise in the prices of food grains, and it was partly on this account and partly owing to other local causes that disturbances broke out in certain indigo concerns in 1908. Mr. Gourlay was deputed by the Government of Bengal to investigate the causes of the disturbances, and his report and recommendations were considered at a series of conferences presided over by Sir Edward Baker, and attended by the local officers of the Government and representatives of the Behar Planters' Association.\* As a result of these discussions, revised conditions for the cultivation of indigo, calculated to remove the grievances

of the raiyats, were accepted by the Behar Planters, Association. In 1912 fresh agitation arose connected not so much with the conditions under which indigo was grown as with the action of certain factories, which were reducing their indigo manufacture, and taking agreements from their tenants for the payment, in lieu of indigo cultivation, of a lump sum in temporarily leased villages or of an increase of rent in villages under permanent lease. Numerous petitions on this subject were presented from time to time to the local officers and to Government, and petitions were at the same time filed by raiyats of the villages in the north of the Bettiah sub-division, in which indigo had never been grown, complaining of the levy of abab or illegal additions to rent by their lease-holders, both Indian and European. The issues raised by all these petitions related primarily to rent and tenancy conditions, and as the revision settlement of the district was about to be undertaken, in the course of which the relations existing between landlords and tenants would come under detailed examination, it was thought advisable to await the report of the Settlement Officers before passing final orders on the petitions. The revision settlement was started in the cold weather of 1913. On the 7th April 1915 a resolution was moved in the Local Legislative Council asking for appointment of a mixed committee of officials and non-officials to enquire into the complaints of the raiyat and to suggest remedies. It was negatived by a large majority including 12 out of the 16 non-official members

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of Council present on the ground that the appointment of such a committee at that stage was unnecessary, as the settlement officers were engaged in the collection of all the materials required for the decision of the questions at issue, and an additional enquiry of the nature proposed would merely have the effect of further exaggerating the relations of landlord and tenant, which were already feeling the strain of the settlement operations. The settlement operations have now been completed in the northern portion of the district, and are approaching completion in the remainder, and a mass of evidence regarding agricultural conditions and the relations between landlords and tenants has been collected. A preliminary report on the complaints of the tenants in the leased villages in the north of the Bettiah sub-division, in which no indigo is grown, has been received, and action has already been taken to prohibit the levy of illegal cesses, and, in the case of the Bettiah Raj, to review the terms of the leases on which the villages concerned are held. As regards the complaints of the raiyats in other parts of district, the final report of the Settlement Officer has not yet been received, but recent events have again brought into prominence the whole question of the relations between landlords and tenants and in particular the taking of agreements from the raiyots for compensation, or for enhanced rent in return for the abandonment of indigo cultivation. In these circumstances and in deference to representations which have been received from various quarters that the time has

come when an enquiry by a joint body of officials and non-officials might materially assist the Local Government in coming to a decision on the problems, which have arisen, the Lieut.-Governor in Council has decided without waiting for the final report of the Settlement operations, to refer the question at issue to a committee of enquiry on which all interests concerned will be represented.

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## APPRECIATIONS.

PROF. GILBERT MURRAY.

\* \* \*

Let me take a present day instance of this battle between a soul and a Government, a very curious instance, because it is almost impossible without more knowledge than most people in England possess to say who was wrong and who right. .

About the year 1889 a young Indian student, called Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, came to England to study law. He was rich and clever, of a cultivated family, gentle and modest in his manner. He dressed and behaved like other people. There was nothing particular about him to show that he had already taken a Jain vow to abstain from wine, from flesh, and from sexual intercourse. He took his degree and became a successful lawyer in Bombay, but he cared more for religion than law. Gradually his asceticism increased. He gave away all his money to good causes except the meagrest allowance. He took vows of poverty. He ceased to practise at the law because his religion—a mysticism which seems to be as closely related to Christianity as it is to any traditional Indian religion—

forbade him to take part in a system which tried to do right by violence. When I met him in England in 1914, he ate, I believe, only rice, and drank only water, and slept on the floor; and his wife who seemed to be his companion in everything lived in the same way. His conversation was that of a cultivated and well-read man with a certain indefinable suggestion of saintliness. His patriotism, which is combined with an enthusiastic support of England against Germany is interwoven with his religion, and aims at the moral regeneration of India on the lines of Indian thought, with no barriers between one Indian and another, to the exclusion as far as possible of the influence of the West with its industrial slavery, its material civilisation, its money-worship, and its wars. (I am merely stating this view, of course, not either criticising it or suggesting that it is right).

Oriental peoples, perhaps owing to causes connected with their form of civilisation, are apt to be enormously influenced by great saintliness of character when they see it. Like all great masses of ignorant people, however, they need some very plain and simple test to assure them that their hero is really a saint and not a humbug, and the test they habitually apply is that of self-denial: Take vows of poverty, live on rice and water, and they will listen to your preaching, as several of our missionaries have found: come to them eating and drinking and dressed in expensive European clothes and they feel differently. It is far from a perfect test, but there is something in it. At any rate I am told that Gandhi's

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influence in India is now enormous, almost equal to that of his friend the late Mr. Gokhale.

And now for the battle. In South Africa there are some 150,000 Indians, chiefly in Natal; and the South African Government, feeling that the colour question in its territories was quite sufficiently difficult already, determined to prevent the immigration of any more Indians, and if possible to expel those who were already there. This last could not be done. It violated a treaty: it was opposed by Natal, where much of the industry depended on Indian labour; and it was objected to by Indian Government and the Home Government. Then began a long struggle. The whites of South Africa determined to make life in South Africa undesirable, if not for all Indians, at least for all Indians above the coolie class. Indians were specially taxed, were made to register in a degrading way, they were classed with Negroes, their thumb-prints were taken by the police as if they were criminals. If owing to the scruples of the Government the law was in any case too lenient, patriotic mobs undertook to remedy the defect. Quite early in the struggle the Indians in South Africa asked Mr. Gandhi to come and help them. He came as a barrister in 1893; he was forbidden to plead. He proved his right to plead; he won his case against the Asiatic Exclusion Act on grounds of constitutional law, and returned to India. Gandhi came again in 1895. He was mobbed and nearly killed at Durban. I will not tell in detail how he settled down eventually in South Africa as a leader and



counsellor to his people; how he found a settlement in the country outside Durban, where the workers should live directly on the land, and all be bound by a vow of poverty. For many years he was engaged in constant passive resistance to the Government and constant efforts to raise and ennoble the inward life of the Indian community. But he was unlike other strikers or resisters in this: that mostly the resister takes advantage of any difficulty of the Government in order to press his claim the harder. Gandhi, when the Government was in any difficulty that he thought serious, always relaxed his resistance and offered his help. In 1899 came the Boer War. Gandhi immediately organised an Indian Red Cross unit. There was a popular movement for refusing it and treating it as seditious. But it was needed. The soldiers wanted it served through the War and was mentioned in despatches, and thanked publicly for its skilful work and courage under fire. In 1904 there was an out break of plague in Johannesburg and Gandhi had private hospital opened before the public authorities had begun to act. In 1906 there was a Native rebellion in Natal; Gandhi raised and personally led a corps of stretcher-bearers, whose work seems to have proved particularly dangerous and painful. Gandhi was thanked by the Governor in Natal and shortly afterwards thrown into jail in Johannesburg.

Lastly in 1913, when he was being repeatedly imprisoned among criminals of the lowest class, and his followers were in jail to the number of 2,500: in the very

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midst of the general strike of Indians in the Transvaal and Natal there occurred the sudden and dangerous railway strike which endangered for the time the very existence of organised society in South Africa. From the ordinary agitator's point of view the game was in Gandhi's hands. He had only to strike his hardest. Instead he gave order for his people to resume work till the Government should be safe again. I cannot say how often he was imprisoned, how often mobbed and assaulted, or what pains were taken to mortify and humiliate him in public. But by 1913 the Indian case had been taken up by Lord Hardinge and the Government of India. An Imperial Commission, reported in his favour on most of the points at issue and an Act was passed according to the commission's recommendations, entitled the Indian Relief Act.

My sketch is very imperfect; The story forms an extra-ordinary illustration of a contest which was won, or practically won, by a policy of doing no wrong, committing no violence, but simply enduring all the punishment the other side could inflict until they became weary and ashamed of punishing. A battle of the unaided human soul against overwhelming material force, and it ends by the units of material force gradually deserting their own banners and coming round to the side of the soul!

Persons in power should be very careful how they deal with a man who cares nothing for sensual pleasure, nothing for riches nothing for comfort or praise or pro-

*Mahatma Gandhi*

motion, but is simply determined to do what he believes to be right. He is a dangerous and uncomfortable enemy because his body, which you can always conquer, gives you so little purchase upon his soul. (*Hibbert Journal*).

EGREGIOUS MR. GANDHI.  
("SOUL OF INDIA IN REVOLT.")

Mr. J. Z. Hodgent.

Who is this 'egregious Mr. Gandhi' whose quaint designs, propounded with all solemnity to bring the British Government to its knees and hasten the establishment of complete self-government in India arouse the enthusiasm of Indians and the redicule of Europeans? He is the soul of India in revolt, the spirit of Indian discontent, the assertion of the East's equality with the west, the most powerful and at the same time the most puzzling personality in India to-day. Physically he hardly counts 5 feet 6 inches in height, frail of body, humble in dress and devoid of good look, he presents an altogether undistinguished figure; but a light in the eye and a spring in the step mark him off from the common herd. Birth and caste yield him little prestige: his father was an obscure official in a Native State and he was himself a barrister who ceased to practice some years ago. He comes not from the proud ranks of priest and soldiers, his caste is that of the trader; but seven years in England and twenty in South Africa have familiarised him with the wider world of men and affairs and given

him a knowledge of the English language possessed by few of his countrymen. He is no orator but yet commands the ear of India. He lays no claim to scholarship, he has written nothing with any prospect of immortality, he is the nominee of no party and yet to-day at the early age of 52 he holds the first place in the hearts of his countrymen. Wherein lies his power? The answer is obvious—in the man himself. This man of humble birth with the light in his eye and the step of a pioneer. this saint-turned politician this returned exile breathing the teachings of Tolstoy and Ruskin, this 'egregious Mr. Gandhi' is the biggest man in India. We have nobody in this country to whom we can like him; a General Booth turned politician or a Reverend Roth Smillie might serve as a possible approach to a Western comparison, but even there we should be far from the real Gandhi. He baffles classification. Here for example, are few estimates that came within my own knowledge. "Sir he is a God" was the Reverend verdict of a Bengali station-master; "God has given only one Gandhi Sahib in this millenium," was the fine tribute of an unlettered villager: "Gandhi is our Mahatma (our superman) was the faith of a student diciple; "This man reminds me of the Apostle Paul," said a shrewed Government official who had evidently been to Sunday school in his youth: "Beware of Gandhi," wrote a valued friend; "he is a revolutionary of a most dangerous type." I have heard him further described as a "charlatan," a "madman," a "visionary," a "menace to British rule" an "astute

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politician who hides his real designs under a mask of guileless simplicity" an "irresponsible and unscrupulous agitator" a country cousin, 'the saviour of his country' and the "Egregious Mr. Gandhi." This then is no common man; be he revolutionary or evolutionary, prophet or politician, saint or sinner, agitator or statesman, madman or wiseman, saviour or wrecker; mere man or super-man, come he in peace or come he in war, he arrests attention and demands a hearing. He is not to be dismissed by the fine sarcasm of an editorial in an English newspaper nor rendered ridiculous by the foolish worship of admiring disciples. In him the current discontents of India begotten of certain unpopular legislative measure, agrarian and industrial grievances, social inequalities at home and abroad the implications of the great war and the after-math of martial law in Punjab find expression and he can only be silenced when these are remedied or allayed.

. But what manner of man is this? He is a patriot. I have never known a more patriotic Indian. He is moreover a man of the people. Poverty is the badge of his tribe; the clothes he wears were probably woven by himself—one of his hobbies is hand-loom weaving; his wants are few—he exists mainly on nuts and fruits—; he always travels in third-class on the Railways—sure token of humility in India; and he is big enough and human enough to break through the conventions of caste and custom in order to eat with Pariahs. He will even dine with a Christian missionary. Either a touch of

nature makes him wonderful kind' or diplomacy drives him to strange companionships and unlikely dinner parties. He is a saint in home-spun: but the man is never lost in the saint for this strangely assorted democrat maintains against heavy odds a keen sense of humour. Then he is a man who bears in his body the marks of suffering. Here if anywhere we light on the secret of his power. This man has suffered for being an Indian; his patriotism has been put to the test of time and again notably in South Africa where he surrendered a lucrative practice at the Bar in order to share the afflictions of his people and where his championship of their cause led him frequently to prison and on one occasion to the verge of a violent death at the hands of a misguided countryman. These marks command respect. He is the stuff of which martyrs are made. A partisan in politics, Gandhi is no bigot in religion. He calls himself a Hindu but that is a term exceedingly broad and in many matters he shares common ground with Christians and Mohammedans. In fact his ardent sympathy with the latter contributed largely to the gravity of the Khilaphat agitation. He is a disciple of Tolstoy and Ruskin but he reverences the Christ and quotes as freely from the Sermon on the Mount as from the Gita. He sees in Apostle Paul's eulogy of love a fore-shadowing of his own doctrine of soul-force and Calvary the supreme symbol of soul force is to holy-ground. Familiarity with the Christian scriptures is a remarkable feature of this remarkable man. Courage and sincerity are closely

allied and Gandhi tears neither friend nor foe. He speaks his mind with refreshing candour, and herein he is a man apart for Indians generally are inclined to say what they think will please and shrink from stating unpleasant truths. Determination is another arresting characteristic. Determination is not far removed from doggedness and we must confess that this "egregious Mr. Gandhi" is a'thrawn deevl! Once set on a certain course nothing moves him but disaster. This was tragically illustrated in his advocacy of 'passive resistance,' which led in some measure at least to the outburst of mob-fury that—ushered in the reign of terror in Punjab. Notwithstanding this obstinate strain in him he knows the value of compromise, and has proved himself more than once a shrewed man of affairs. Few practical politicians at the age of 52 have a better record of something attempted something done. His record in South Africa will bear the closest scrutiny and all who read it, must bear tribute however reluctantly, to his resourcefulness as his patriotism. Returning to India late in life, he plunged with eager spirits into its problems and many hailed him as the natural successor of Gokhale—one of the greatest Indians of all time. For a time social and economic questions claimed him; he intervened effectively in agrarian troubles in Champaran and Kaira, and showed no little resource in handling labour problems; he advocated the revival of cottage industries, notably hand-loom-weaving, and pleaded earnestly for the recovery of self-respect among his people;



## *Mahatma Gandhi*

female emancipation found in him an ardent champion, and education, on Indian lines a powerful advocate; ultimately impelled by the sovereign motive of patriotism, he entered the troubled arena of Indian politics and he stands out to-day the acknowledged leader of the Extremist wing of the Nationalist party and the author of the policy of Non-cooperation. This is frankly a policy of boycott and its avowed object is by rendering the present Government futile and impossible, to win complete self-government for India. Primarily it had in view the modification of the peace treaty with Turkey and the reparation for the miscarriage of justice in the Punjab, but these minor claims are now merged in the supreme claim for immediate and complete Home-rule.

We do well to remember that this Non-cooperation movement has behind it not only the dominating personality of Gandhi but also the following sources of discontent; (1) The Rowllet Acts measure designed to deal immediately and drastically with sedition, but carried through in the teeth of vehement opposition of educated India; (2) The Peace Treaty with Turkey the terms of which by their alleged unfairness to the Sultan of Turkey and his Empire, aroused the deep resentment of the Indian Mahommedans; (3). The unfortunate and tragic happenings in the Punjab in April 1919. "Martial Law and no damned nonsense" may be a sovereign remedy in desperate emergencies, but in the Punjab if it averted a mutiny, as its defenders claim, it left behind an embittered populace and wounded the hearts of

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the province : (4). The treatment of 'Indians in South Africa and elsewhere—The badge of inferiority is harder to bear as the national consciousness in India gains in strength : (5). The acute economic pressure created by the war and the apparent helplessness of Government to relieve the situation : (6) The ever recurring agrarian and industrial troubles turned so easily to political account since the grievances as a rule are genuine and : (7). the universal spirit of revolt against things as they are in the world to-day and vocal in India as else-where. Bearing these things in mind, it is not altogether surprising that ardent spirits like Gandhi have come to the conclusion that British administration in India has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. Things, they argue, could not be worse under Indian-rule. That they are mistaken hardly affects the issue; they are out to make India mistress within her own house and the spirit of haste now dominates their counsels. Hitherto the goal of educated India has been self-government within the Empire ; to-day the Extremist wing of the Nationalist Party define their object as "self-government by all legitimate and peaceful means". The reassuring words 'within the British Empire' are dropped and the possibility of separation must therefore be faced. In the meantime India may become a vast Ireland. I am of opinion however that the policy of non-cooperation will fail in its immediate objective for two very good reasons : (1). It runs counter to human nature. It asks the lawyer to give up practice, the trader to confine him-

self to Indian goods, the politician to shun the council, the patrician to renounce his titles, the student to withdraw from government schools, and the parent to cease propagating this kind till Home-rule is won. This is magnificent but it lays an impossible tax on Indian human nature as at present constituted. (2) It is dictated by no overmastering need. It overlooks the salient fact that the peasant, the man who really matters must ultimately pass-has yet to be persuaded that Home-rule is a good thing, far less an immediate necessity.

But whether non-cooperation succeeds or fails Gandhi himself will triumph; for he represents the soul of a people, and the man is bigger than his methods. Ere we part from him let us remember that his campaign is inspired by love of India rather than hatred of Great Britain. He is singularly free from race prejudice; He was with us heart and soul in the struggle with Germany a year ago as he was with us when as captain of an Indian Company of stretcher-bearers, he helped us against the Boers. He counted among his friends the late Lord Roberts; he may find another in Lord Reading. When in course of time the ‘United States of India’ come into existence I hazard the opinion that history will record the spectacle as an outcome of the work and worth of the ‘egregious Mr Gandhi’ as well as the crowning triumph of British statesmanship in India—Glasgow Herald.

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